DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 366 961 CS 214 211

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TITLE Oregon Statewide Writing Assessment 1991 and 1992 with Student Writings Grades 8 and 11.
INSTITUTION Oregon State Dept. of Education, Salem.
PUB DATE Apr 93
NOTE 118p.
AVAILABLE FROM Publications Sales Office, Oregon Department of Education, Salem, OR 97310-0290 ($8).
PUB TYPE Reports - Descriptive (141) -- Guides - Non-Classroom Use (055)

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC05 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS *Evaluation Methods; Secondary Education; Staff Development; *Student Writing Models; *Writing Achievement; *Writing Evaluation; *Writing Improvement
IDENTIFIERS Alternative Assessment; *Oregon; Process Approach (Writing); Writing Test Prompts

ABSTRACT

Noting that Oregon has been a pioneer in developing assessments which require actual student writing, this booklet includes a collection of student essays and shows how they were evaluated by teachers. The sample essays in the booklet are useful in staff development activities and may also be shared with students, serving as models to help students improve their writing. The booklet notes that scores increased in five of the six writing traits for the 1992 assessment. The first chapter briefly discusses writing assessment in Oregon. The second chapter presents the six-trait analytic model, writing prompts, papers by 8th-graders, papers by 11th-graders, and miscellaneous papers. The third chapter discusses the teaching of writing as a process. The trait scoring rubric, mode scoring rubric, guides to revision, the student writer's report, a 16-item annotated bibliography on writing instruction, and lists of writing panel members are attached. (RS)

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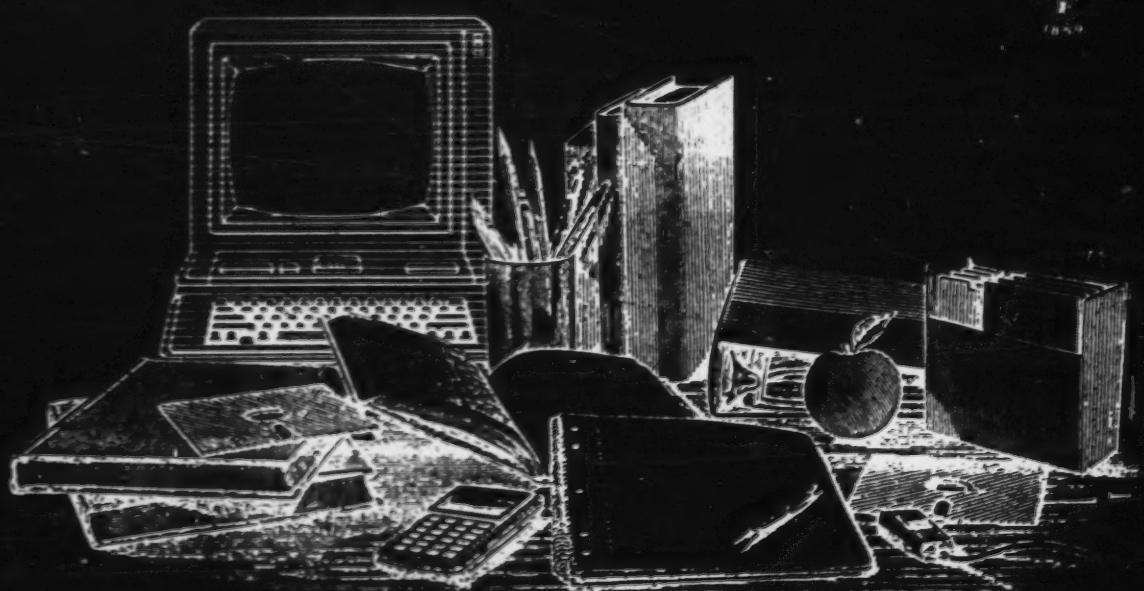
Oregon Statewide *Writing* Assessment 1991 and 1992

with Student Writings
Grades 8 and 11



Norma Paulus, State Superintendent of Public Instruction, Oregon Department of Education, Salem, Oregon

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Oregon Statewide *Writing* Assessment

1991 and 1992

with Student Writings
Grades 8 and 11

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April 1993

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Produced by the
Office of Assessment and Technology
Oregon Department of Education
Salem, Oregon 97310-0290

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Foreword

Oregon's statewide assessment program is a key element of the Oregon Educational Act for the 21st Century. Results have provided information about how individual students are doing and point out strengths and weaknesses in skill areas at the local and state levels.

The 1992 writing assessment results were impressive. Scores increased in five of the six writing traits. Students are showing a stronger ability to organize their thoughts and communicate clearly with a distinct personal style.

Oregon has been a pioneer in developing assessments which require actual student writing -- a more authentic measurement of writing skills. The writing is evaluated by teachers who rate various aspects of the essays.

This approach to writing assessment has proven so popular that many teachers have incorporated it as part of their daily instructional program. Other states have adopted the model as part of their assessment program and encourage teachers to use it.

This document includes a collection of student essays and shows how they were evaluated by teachers. The sample essays are useful in staff development activities and may also be shared with students, serving as excellent models to help students improve their writing.

Norma Paulus
Superintendent of Public Instruction

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Chapter 1:
The Story of Writing Assessment in Oregon

In Oregon, as throughout the country, the focus and look of writing assessment has changed dramatically in the last decade, and it continues to change as Oregon educators gain new insights about defining and teaching writing. In just over ten years, Oregon has gone from an *indirect* assessment of writing-related skills (e.g., through multiple-choice tests) to a full-scale complex analytic assessment that provides information on students' writing proficiency across seven separate dimensions of writing skills.

How it all began. Oregon's first statewide *direct* assessment of students' writing skill was conducted in 1978. That was the first time that Oregon student writers were asked to actually produce a sample of original writing to be judged by trained professionals. Students at grades 4, 7 and 11 were tested; a representative sample (based on size, organizational structure and geographic location) of schools throughout the state participated. Results were scored holistically, so that each paper received one score, based on how the paper worked as a whole. In 1982, a second holistic assessment was conducted, again involving students in grades 4, 7 and 11.

Wanting specifics. During the early 1980s, increasing numbers of writing teachers began calling for a way of assessing writing that would allow them to cite specific strengths and weaknesses in students' writing. In 1985, the decision was made to score papers analytically, using a scoring guide which had been developed by teachers from the Beaverton School District and Portland Public Schools. This six-trait analytic scoring guide was subsequently refined and revised by teachers throughout Oregon and the Northwest, and continues to undergo new changes as teachers use and respond to it.

In 1985, 1987 and 1989, Oregon conducted direct assessments of eighth graders' writing, involving in each year a random sample of several thousand Oregon eighth grade students. In each case, papers were scored analytically.

Methods and materials were developed during this time for sharing the analytic approach with teachers and for helping them to teach it to their student writers, thereby both empowering students to become evaluators of their own work and building a powerful foundation for revising their writing. Support for analytic scoring grew as teachers found they could use the model in the classroom--and moreover, that they could teach students as young as third grade to assess their own and others' writing.

Expanding--and adding modes. In 1989, the Oregon Legislature funded the Oregon Department of Education's plan to expand Oregon's direct writing assessment, and to change the format slightly. The Essential Learning Skills, developed in the mid-1980s by Oregon educators, call for students at various grade levels to demonstrate proficiency across five modes, or forms, of writing: Imaginative, Narrative, Expository, Persuasive and Descriptive. The Oregon Department of Education's plan was to measure student writing performance at multiple grade levels (3, 5, 8 and 11) across all five modes. In 1990, the Oregon Department of Education conducted a pilot for this expanded assessment.

Getting bigger--140,000 students in 1991. Successful conclusion of the 1990 pilot led to a greatly expanded direct writing assessment in 1991, in which all Oregon students in grades 3, 5, 8 and 11 participated. In all, more than 140,000 student papers were read and rated for this assessment.

Budget crunch in 1992. Because of budget constraints resulting from Ballot Measure 5, only students in grades 3 and 8 participated in the 1992 assessment, about 70,000 students in all. Students in grades 5 and 11 participated in 1993. The form of the assessment remained the same, except that beginning in 1992 students were provided with a choice of two prompts within each mode. Each paper still received two readings with scores on each of the six traits and mode.

What the findings tell us. Results of the 1991 and 1992 assessments indicate that students at all grade levels tested have the potential to develop skill across the five modes of writing. Though every mode of writing produced difficulties for some students, this writing collection is testimony to the fact that across Oregon there are student writers who can craft a fine narrative, provide clear and comprehensive information through expository writing, persuade an audience without resorting to emotion or leaning too hard on opinion, describe a person or place or experience so clearly the reader feels he/she is involved personally in the experience, or push the bounds of imagination to new limits.

The challenge for the months to come will be to develop the kinds of support materials and inservice strategies that can help teachers of writing strengthen their students' confidence and skill across the traits and within each mode.

Chapter 2: The Classroom Connection

Teachers in classrooms across the state have used representative student papers as a critical part of their writing instruction since the first book of eighth grade papers, like this one, was published in 1985. In these classrooms, students are invited to read, enjoy and thoughtfully respond to the writing of young authors like themselves. Students and teachers examine stories and essays that are interesting, well-crafted and purposefully move the reader to interact with the writer. They use the papers as a place from which they can develop a common vocabulary and set of values for good writing.

They contrast the pieces that are working well with those that are not as successful to help students identify the specific characteristics that make writing work. By sharing examples of strong and weak writing, teachers involve students in the process of understanding and applying criteria for the evaluation of writing performance. Through this process, students learn to internalize criteria and develop the skills necessary to evaluate their own and others' work--a powerful and dynamic application for assessment.

> "We must constantly remind ourselves that the ultimate purpose of evaluation is to enable students to evaluate themselves."
>
> Arthur Costa, 1989

This collection of student writing is a beginning toward that end. If you are a classroom teacher, there are specific things you can do to share this collection with your students in ways that deepen their understanding of quality writing. Here are a few suggestions:

1. Share samples aloud so that you and student writers hear the voice within.

2. Contrast strong and weak examples across one trait or mode, and discuss differences. From that discussion, work with your student writers to build your own weak-to-strong continuum of performance.

3. Teach students to score samples of writing, using the criteria for analytic traits (or modes) in this booklet. Discuss results. If students disagree, invite them to resolve their differences through discussion--a fine way for students to begin defining what it is they value from the perspective of a critical reader.

4. Simplify the criteria if the language is too complex. Invite students to work with you on this task, putting definitions for strong ideas, sound organization, powerful voice, etc., into language that speaks to student writers.

5. Create posters, checklists or self-reflection guidelines, that capture what your student writers (and you) think is most critical across the various traits and modes.

The following collection of student papers can be used to share strong and weak examples. These samples demonstrate three levels of writing performance. The first group (High) is one that will amuse, surprise, inform and deeply move the reader. These students have written with sincerity and integrity, often startling readers with how much they have to say and how well it is

communicated. The second group of papers (Middle) are those which reflect a balance of both strengths and weaknesses in the traits of writing. These papers communicate on a functional level, have the beginnings of interesting things to come, but do not demonstrate control. The third type of papers (Low) in the collection are examples of writing which do not meet the criteria for successful writing. These selections show writing in its earliest stages, where the writer has not yet defined the topic in a meaningful way that gives direction, force, life and energy to the piece. But even these very rudimentary pieces have much to teach us, because through analyzing them, we gain an understanding of what writers must do to make their work succeed.

Along with the sample student papers, there is a brief description of the six traits and five modes used in evaluation. Complete scoring rubrics in reproducible form for the traits and modes are provided in the Appendix. A list of the prompts used in the 1991 writing assessment precedes the sample student papers.

Six-trait Analytic Model Summary

The Oregon Analytic Model comprises six traits. The complete model, with full descriptors for all criteria, is reprinted for you in the Appendix. But here, briefly, are descriptions of the six key traits:

IDEAS

The ideas are the heart of the message, the content of the piece, the main theme, together with all the details that enrich and develop that theme. The ideas are strong when the message is clear, not garbled. The writer chooses details that are interesting, important, and informative--often the kinds of details the reader would not normally anticipate or predict. Successful writers do not tell readers things they already know: e.g., "It was a sunny day, and the sky was blue, the clouds were fluffy white . . . ." They notice what others overlook, seek out the extraordinary, the unusual, the bits and pieces of life that others might not see.

ORGANIZATION

Organization is the internal structure of a piece of writing, the thread of central meaning, the pattern that holds everything together. It doesn't matter too much what the pattern is, so long as it fits the central idea well. Organizational structure can be based on comparison-contrast, deductive logic, point-by-point analysis, development of a central theme, chronological history of an event, or any of a dozen other identifiable patterns. When the organization is strong, the piece begins meaningfully and creates in the writer a sense of anticipation that is ultimately, systematically fulfilled. Events proceed logically; information is given to the reader in the right doses at the right times so that the reader never loses interest and never loses the "big picture"--the overriding sense of what the writer is driving at. Connections are strong, which is another way of saying that bridges from one idea to the next hold up. The piece closes with a sense of resolution, tying up loose ends, bringing things to closure, answering important questions while still leaving the reader something to think about.

VOICE

The voice is the writer coming through the words, the sense that a real person is speaking to us and cares about the message. It is the heart and soul of the writing, the magic, the wit, the feeling, the life and the breath. When the writer is engaged personally with the topic, he/she imparts a personal tone and flavor to the piece that is unmistakably his/hers alone. And it is that individual something different from the mark of all other writers that we call voice.

> "Voice allows the reader to hear an individual human being speak from the page. Good writing always has a strong and appropriate voice. Voice is the quality, more than any other . . . that allows us to recognize excellent writing. We respond to voice when we hear it."
>
> --Donald Murray
> *A Writer Teaches Writing*, Houghton-Mifflin: 1985

"Writing with no voice is dead, mechanical, faceless. It lacks any sound. Writing with no voice may be saying something true, important, or new; it may be logically organized; it may even be a work of genius. But it is as though the words came through some kind of mixer rather than being uttered by a person."

--Peter Elbow
Writing With Power, Oxford Press: 1973

WORD CHOICE

Word choice is the use of rich, colorful, precise language that communicates not just in a functional way, but in a way that moves and enlightens the reader. In good descriptive writing, strong word choice paints clear pictures in the reader's mind. In good expository writing, strong word choice clarifies and expands ideas. In persuasive writing, careful word choice moves the reader to a new vision of things. Strong word choice is characterized not so much by an exceptional vocabulary that impresses the reader, but more by the skill to use everyday words precisely.

SENTENCE FLUENCY

Sentence fluency is the rhythm and flow of the language, the sound of word patterns, the way in which the writing plays to the ear--not just to the eye. How does it sound when read aloud? That's the test. Fluent writing has cadence, power, rhythm and movement. It is free of awkward word patterns that slow the reader's progress. Sentences vary in length and style, and are so well-crafted that reading aloud is a pleasure.

CONVENTIONS

Conventions are the mechanical correctness of the piece--spelling, grammar and usage, paragraphing (indenting in the appropriate spots), use of capitals, and punctuation. Writing that is strong in conventions has usually been proofread and edited with care. Handwriting and neatness are not scored as part of this trait. The key is this: How much work would a copy editor need to do to prepare the piece for publication?

"You can't edit until you have something to edit. If you have written a lot, if you have digressed and wandered into some interesting areas and accumulated some interesting material (more than you can see any unity in), and if, at last, a center of gravity has emerged and you find yourself saying to yourself, `Yes, now I see what I'm driving at, now I see what I've been stumbling around trying to say,' you are finally in a position to start mopping up--to start editing."

--Peter Elbow
Writing Without Teachers, Oxford: 1973

Five-Mode Summary

Descriptive: Descriptive writing describes an object, place, or person in a way that creates a vivid impression in the reader's mind, enabling the reader to visualize what is being described, and to feel that he/she is very much part of the writer's experience. Descriptive writing often makes elaborate use of sensory details (often those that others might overlook) that enrich or define the central impression. Details go beyond the general (e.g., The house was big and nice.) They truly enable the reader to picture or "relive" what the writer is telling (e.g., The massive brick structure sprawled across a quarter acre of ground, and rose more than sixty feet into the air.) As appropriate, the writer uses details that appeal to all senses: sight, smell, hearing, taste, touch. The unmistakable purpose is to create a strong and vivid image or impression in the reader's mind.

Narrative: Narrative writing recounts a personal experience or tells a story based on a real event. All details come together in an integrated way to create some central theme or impression. The writer may use first or third person since, even though the writing is based on experience, portions may be elaborated or fictionalized, or the writer may choose to "stand back" from the experience by telling it as if it were fiction. The writing has a clear, identifiable storyline (e.g., resolution of a problem) that is easy to paraphrase. The unmistakable purpose of the writing is to recount a personal experience in a concise and focused way in order to create some central theme or impression in the reader's mind.

Imaginative: Imaginative writing tells a story based on the writer's imagination. The writing may create an imaginative setting, situation or character, may predict what might happen under hypothetical circumstances, or may solve a real or imaginary problem in some creative way. Imaginative writing is basically fictional, though a writer may use his/her experience or knowledge of the world, people or situations to bring a special flair or flavor to the writing. Imaginative writing is characterized, as appropriate, by insight, creativity, drama, suspense, humor or fantasy. The clear purpose is to entertain the reader or write for the author's own pleasure.

Expository: Expository writing gives information, explains something, clarifies a process or defines a concept. The writing has a clear, central focus developed through a carefully crafted presentation of facts, examples or definitions. Though objective and not dependent on emotion, expository writing may be lively, engaging, and reflective of the writer's underlying commitment to the topic. The writer shows a concern for the reader, and consistently presents information in a way that enhances the reader's understanding. The unmistakable purpose of the writing is to inform, clarify, explain, define or instruct.

Persuasive: Persuasive writing attempts to convince the reader that a point of view is valid or persuade the reader to take a specific action. Successful persuasive writing is based on a topic that is limited in scope (readily definable), debatable and meaningful or important to both the writer and intended audience. The topic or issue is clearly stated and elaborated as necessary to indicate in-depth understanding on the part of the writer. If it is important to present two sides of an issue, the writer does so, but in a way that makes clear his/her position. In addition, the primary argument is stated clearly and presented in a compelling way. The unmistakable purpose is to persuade the reader.

Grade 8 Prompts-1991

Descriptive: Think about what your school is like at lunch time. Pick one particular place, large or small, and picture it in your mind. DESCRIBE this place at lunch time so clearly that your reader can tell just what it is like to be there.

Narrative: You can probably remember at least one time when you did something for someone else that made you feel proud of yourself. Think about what you did and how you felt about it. Tell WHAT HAPPENED.

Imaginative: In the following poem, Shel Silverstein describes a very "messy room."

Whosoever room this is should be ashamed!
His underwear is hanging on the lamp.
His raincoat is there in the overstuffed chair,
And the chair is becoming quite mucky and damp.
His workbook is wedged in the window,
His sweater's been thrown on the floor.
His scarf and one ski are beneath the TV,
And his pants have been carelessly hung on the door.
His books are all jammed in the closet,
His vest has been left in the hall.
A lizard named ED is asleep in his bed,
And his smelly old sock has been stuck to the wall.
Whosoever room this is should be ashamed!
Donald or Robert or Willie or--
Huh? You say it's mine? Oh dear,
I knew it looked familiar!

MAKE UP A STORY in which the main character is the person who lives in this room. (You can pretend to be this person if you wish.) By the way the story unfolds, let the reader know how the room got that way.

Expository: A lot of people wear T-shirts with slogans on them. If you had to choose one slogan for your shirt, what would it say? Think of a slogan that would be appropriate to wear at school. Then, EXPLAIN why this slogan fits you and why you chose it.

Persuasive: Almost everybody would like to change someone's mind about something. Perhaps there is something you would like a friend, parent, teacher, principal, public official, or someone else to feel differently about. Write to the person PERSUADING him or her to change that particular position or attitude. Use specific reasons and examples to make your argument CONVINCING.

Grade 8 Prompts-1992

Descriptive:

1. Describe a place where people go to have a good time like a fair, a carnival, someone's home, or a place outdoors. Describe the place so clearly that someone who has never been there could tell what it is like.

2. Think of a teacher that you will remember for a long, long time. Describe that teacher so clearly that your reader will know just what makes him or her so hard to forget.

Narrative:

1. Sometimes things turn out in a way we did not think would happen. Tell about a time or event that turned out differently than you expected.

2. Think about a time when you were challenged in some way--by yourself, another person, or some situation. Tell what happened.

Imaginative:

1. Imagine that the time is late at night, you (or a character in your story) are at home or in a familiar place when the telephone rings. Create a story that includes this scene.

2. Imagine that you are caring for younger children for an evening. Make up a story to tell them to entertain them. Invent your own story rather than using one you have heard before.

Expository:

1. You have been asked to choose one item that will show what life is like in our society in the 1990s. The item will go into a time capsule to be opened in 200 years. Tell what the item is and **explain** why you chose it.

2. Each child has a special position in their family. Explain the advantages and disadvantages of the position you hold in your family--youngest child, only child, middle child, oldest child, etc.

Persuasive

1. The recent legislature passed a law that banned all tobacco products from school buildings and grounds. Take a stand about this new law and try to persuade your reader to see the situation from your point of view.

2. Pretend that a friend of yours has decided not to eat milk, cheese or any kind of vegetables. Write a paper to talk your friend into eating a healthy diet. Use good reasons to convince your friend.

Grade 11 Prompts-1991

Descriptive: Almost everyone has had at least one teacher who is hard to forget. Think of a teacher you have had that you will remember for a long, long time. Describe that teacher so clearly that your reader will know just what that teacher is like and what makes him or her so hard to forget.

Narrative: Almost everyone would like a chance to do or say something over again so that it could turn out differently. Recall a time when you did or said something you wished you could erase and do over. Tell WHAT HAPPENED.

Imaginative: In the following poem, Donald Justice sets up a situation in which a late-night driver sees one lonely light on in a house in the small town of Ladora, Wyoming. He wonders about the person who is awake in the middle of the night.

Excepting the diner
On the outskirts
The town of Ladora
At 3 A.M.
Was dark but
For my headlights
And up in
One second-story room
A single light

Where someone
Was sick or
Perhaps reading
As I drive past
At seventy
Not thinking
This poem
Is for whoever
Had the light on.

MAKE UP A STORY in which the main character is awake at 3 a.m. with the light on. (You can pretend to be this person, if you wish.) By the way the story unfolds, let the reader know why the light is on, and what the person is thinking about as the car speeds by.

Expository: Everyone is an "expert" at something. Think of something you do well--anything at all. EXPLAIN how to do this so clearly and so completely that your reader will understand just what it takes to be good at this activity.

Persuasive: Your school will consider teaching a new class in any subject that is useful and interesting to students. What new course would you like to see taught? Write the New Course Committee and PERSUADE the committee to add your course. Give reasons and examples that will CONVINCE the committee that your course could benefit students.

8th GRADE STUDENT PAPERS - TRAITS

IDEAS AND CONTENT-High

These papers all scored high on the trait of Ideas. The first is written from a fresh perspective--a twist that gives it a touch of humor and insight. Notice the descriptive verbs and modifiers. The second adopts a strong and positive tone about the values of reading.

* * * * * *

"Hey! Get off me! Go somewhere else! Just leave me alone!"

All I have ever longed for in my life was peace and quiet, but it seems evident I'll never have a genie to grant me that wish. You don't know what it's like to live a life with people sitting on you, throwing food on you, even relieving themselves on you. I've gotten used to most of it, but I'd swear my work days are getting longer every minute!

I see it all - everything from meringue mocha mousse to filet fried fricassee. Kids snickering, teachers screeching, food flying, and that's on a good day!

If someone were to ask me to describe myself, it would be something like this: balanced, well set, made of the strongest metal, glossy, and polished to perfection by my friend Danny.

Danny is a guy in his mid 40's, pessimistic but dependable, jittery yet harsh, menacing, but beyond all, qualified for his job as janitor. Everyday I see him in his blue denim painter pants, like a broken record playing over and over again. He has also never failed to wear his flamboyant biker hat with the scantily-clothed girl leaning against a cherry red Harley-Davidson on it.

I suppose you're wondering what the kids are like. That can be explained in 3 short words: hyperactive, loud, and disgusting. No wonder they are always getting in trouble.

It seems like such an easy job, being a table in a lunchroom, but take it from me, it's no piece of cake. The bangs, booms, and blasts. The jiggles, pounds, and rattles. The noises from the kitchen.

Then brring . . . . the bell rings and my world becomes peaceful and quiet once more. Only can I hope that the children move away, the school closes down, and the teachers lose their jobs. Then my world would be perfect: just me and my world.

* * * * * *

Have you ever been a knight in shining armor battling a fierce dragon? Were you ever the first man to walk on Mars? Through books you can have all sorts of adventures like these, go to exotic places, explore the unknown.

In a book you can slip away from everyday life and become one of the characters. You can share a fantastic adventure under the sea with Captain Nemo, or soar through the air on a flying trapeze. Books give you the opportunity to do things you never dreamed of doing in real life.
If all these things about books are true then why don't more people read instead of sitting in front of a television like they're in a trance? More people need to discover the joy of reading that television can't create.
Everyone has their favorite types of books. Some like science fiction while others like fantasy. No matter what kind you like there are plenty of them out there. All you have to do is find them.

* * * * * *

IDEAS AND CONTENT-Middle

These papers are a balance of strengths and weaknesses in Ideas. The first reveals strong feelings about the importance of school, but it's awash in generalities and platitudes. The second provides a broad-brushstroke picture of the cafeteria at lunch time, but leaves the reader wishing for those little telling details that would make the image indelible.

* * * * * *

Take a look around! Many people we see everday, make it self-evident that they have dropped-out of school. Now, more than ever, dropping - out is occurring in the world. Fundraisers and TV shows are stressing the importance of school. There are hideous consequences for dropping-out and there are fantastic advantages for staying in school.

First, the consequences. Negative thinking has some people feeling that without school they can get by. This type of thinking is stupid from my perspective. School is important. The outlook for the world without school, is a world I don't want to live in. Think of everbody without schooling.

Second, the benefits of school. See people advance to the future. Going beyond the solar system. Helping to cure diseases. Excelling to high goals that school provides. What we learn is the key to the future.

I trully feel school is the greatest and exciting gateway to my future. And when I've achieved the key I'll open the next stage of my life. When done thinking make the right decision. **STAY IN SCHOOL!**

* * * * * *

Western at lunch time is like a mad rush in the streets of New York. There is doors being pushed open, lockers slammed, voices yelling, and teachers leaving for lunch.

The Cafeteria is about as big as the gym except the cafeteria has a stage. There is kids running to get in line for lunch, even though the food isn't very good. The students are yelling because the lunchroom is so noisey you can't hear yourself think.

There is a smell of hamburgers and french fries. Tell you the truth it's not a very good smell from my opinion.

As you are eating Mrs. Smith, the supervisor is walking around the tables and keeping an eye on you. She makes sure that the people who have to wash tables don't leave. I would say people that have to clean up the floor must have a hard job.

Mr. Guss, the principle goes around rounding up the kids that have detention because of doing something wrong.

What students do while they arn't eating in there lunch break is either stay in the cafeteria and talk, or they can go to the gameroom, computerroom, library, intermirals in the big gym, or you can go outside.

So I would say that my school has lots of things to do during lunch.

* * * * * *

IDEAS AND CONTENT-Low

These papers scored low on the trait of Ideas. Both reveal a start point, but neither gets very far in developing its central idea or giving the reader a strong sense of purpose.

* * * * * *

One time about four months ago my friend Mark needed a new deck for his skateboard and didn't have any money. I had a broken deck that still had a garentee and gave it to him to take back. He got a new deck about two to three weeks later. He was happy I was happy We went skating later that week the board worked awsome.

* * * * * *

If I had T-shirt that said what I wanted it to say. It would be black with white writing. The slogan would say "Pardon Me I have nothing to say." That means I like to be a round people, but I usualy have nothing to say. I got this saying from a joke. The way this joke goes walk down the street, go up to a stranger and say pardon me I have nothing to say.

* * * * * *

ORGANIZATION-High

These papers show strong Organization. The story of helping someone in need begins with a real lead, sets up the turning point nicely, and brings things to closure at the end. The second is a highly focused piece, that uses scant visual detail to highlight the bleakness of the scene. The story of the lawyer and her not-so-tidy spouse has a good flow and well-handled transitions.

* * * * * *

I Feel Proud When I Help Someone

Have you ever helped someone in need? If you have you'll know it makes you feel really good inside. It puts a different light on helping people. I know how this is because I helped a person in need one time, and not only did it make me feel good it gave me a new friend.

There was this old lady that lived across the street from me. I thought she must be very lonely because her husband had passed away and she was living all alone. When I came home from school I would see her on hands and knees digging weeds out of her garden. Then she would load up a heavy wheelbarrow and haul the weeds into a pile. I used to think to myself, I wonder if she could use some help? But I would always dismiss the thought and go play.

One day when I got off the school bus I saw her walking down her steep driveway to get the newspaper. Whithout even realizing it I picked up the paper and ran over to give it to her. When I handed her the paper I felt kinda funny, until I saw how grateful she was. She was so thankful that she said if I did this every day that she would give me something in return. So as the days went on I continued to get her paper and occasionally help her in her garden. I did get a treat. She gave me fresh baked chocolate chip cookies.

The day came when we were spending a lot of time together. We weaded the garden, burned brush, and washed windows. This is how my neighbor, Mrs. Higgins and I became close friends. Even though Mrs. Higgins has moved to a rest home now it still gives me a warm feeling to think back and realize that just by going a little bit out of my way to help my neighbor, that it brought us to be very close friends.

* * * * * *

On the bed lies a young boy in his early teens. He is surrounded by a thrashed bedroom with nothing on the unornamented white walls and emptiness on the cold ceiling exccept a flickering dull lightbulb. The source of light rocks back and forth slowly from a burst of wind coming from a window. It has oil from some ones face on it. He has tried to shut the window during the chill of winter, using the only organ that moves, his head. The room is filled with clothes and trash that didn't make it to the garbage can. Next to the bed is a wheelchair. The boy waits silently for some one to come and put his paralyzed body in the wheelchair. Finally the boy dozes off dreaming of what it would be like to stand up, walk around and clean his helter-skelter room.

ORGANIZATION-Middle

These papers reflect a balance of strengths and weaknesses in Organization. The T-shirt paper is certainly not disorganized; in fact, it is extremely structured--and that is both the strength and the problem, really. The paragraphing and internal structure (make a point, provide an example) are so very predictable that they seem to inhibit free and open expression of ideas. The essay on Longer Lunch could be greatly strengthened with a little work on sequencing (getting to the point a bit faster!) plus a lead and conclusion that would grab the reader's attention.

* * * * * *

T-Shirt Slogan Topic

My T-shirt slogan would say "Prompt Persistant Persuasive Pal." This slogan fits me because the words fit the actions that I do in life.

I like to be on time to my events & extra-curricular activities. I can remember times when I was late to an event & was so embarrassed walking in to an onlooking class. I enjoy the promptness in my life because it helps me to stay organized.

My persistance never ceases. When one of my interrogative statements is asked & overlooked, I never quit until I believe I have been heard & a reasonable goal has been achieved. Sometimes people might think I'm pesky, but I review myself as persistant.

Persuading is like a verbal sport. People competing to get full attention of an audience or customer. I perceive persuading as one of my stronger abilities. I'm involved in Student Council/Government & this quality is very important to get people motivated. To be able to persuade someone you must have confidence in yourself & hold your beliefs close to heart.

A real pal is what I hope I have been, am at present moment & will always be. I love life and wouldn't trade it for any of the treasures upon this earth. This slogan suits me because that is how I think, feel and believe.

Thank you for your time; I hope that a "Prompt, Persistant, Persuasive Pal" is what I will be remembered as in your life.

* * * * * *

Longer Lunch

For this writing assessment I've chosen to ask the principal of are school why lunch time is so short.

At Western we have two lunches first and second lunch. We have two because of the amount of students we have. The first lunch begins after fourth period and second lunch begins after fifth period.

At noon we play basketball intramurals, and by the time we eat lunch we only have ten minutes to play. Thats not enough time to make a five on five game enjoying.

I think at Western we should take three minutes off every class and then that would allow us a forty-five minute lunch period, instead of the thirty minutes we have now.

I think alot of people at Western would agree with me about this situation, but what can I do about it. I'm just an eighth grader trying to fight against a principal

So what I'm trying to say is Mr Keifer give us students a longer lunch.

ORGANIZATION-Low

These papers are weak in Organization. They tend to wander, and lack a strong sense of purpose that would give direction to the writing.

* * * * * *

At school my favorite place to eat lunch (even though I don't get to eat very much) is outside. I like to eat outside only when it's a nice day.

One of the reasons why I like to eat outside I like to eat outside, is because I like it alot better than eating in our old, rounddown gym, another reason why I like it is because I just like being outside more than I like being inside. These are the reason my favorite place to eat is outside.

* * * * * *

Convincing

Convincing people to not fight with each other and to convince them not to get a devorce or about going out and doing something really stupid. Convince the kids not to fight and not to go out at night because something real bad could happen to them. Convincing your friends not to fight with each other all the time. exepeshely if they got kids in the house. Convincing all the people not to do something that they might regreit in the life time. Convincing all the kids about all tipes of stuff like anything that comes in to mind.

* * * * * *

Hi my name is Huey, and I'm four-teen years old; I'm in the 8th grade class and my teacher's name is Mr. Waller but all most everybody in the school call hin "Mr. Waller; My school name is "Excelsior school."

My topic is about people usin T-shirts with slogans on them, and if I had to choose one slogan for my shirt what it would said? and if I have to think of a slogan that would be appropriate to wear at school, and I had to explain why this slogan fits me and why I choose it.

Well!, I don't remenbered when I started to use T-shirts with slogans on, I just remenbered when my mother use to put me on shirts with out any slogan, but anyway! now many people use T-shirts with slogans on since it started I think many people started to use because maybe they can spress many things, or anotherway that it can be is for a advertisment for sell something. One way is for the many sports fans to buy T-shirt with a slogan on it because it has the name of the team they like, on basketball right now is famous so people buy T-shirts with a slogan on it or sometimes people like to use T-shirts with a slogan on because they think is cool, on someway people use it to spress things of the Mother Nature with slogan of a animal or just saing "Save the Earth" there's manyway to spress slogans.

One way that I like is the slogan with the letters that said is "Harley Davidson" or a slogan of an animal. Right now a appropriate slogan to wear at school would be a slogan about saving the earth from contamination and all those problems it would be a good idea, I think all most everybody would see it at school I like allmost every T-shirt because I think that's nothing wrong to use any kind of T-shirt. That's what I think, but everybody think different and wear different styles. I hope who ever read these paper could undertan what I'm talking about, and my writting.

* * * * * *

VOICE-High

Notice the Voice in this paper. It is light, whimsical, and lively.

* * * * * *

"Oh no!" screemed Nate, "Ed's missing!" Ed, Nates pet gecko had suddenly dissapeered. Nate look frantically all around his room and the rest of the house, but to no avail. He ran down stairs to his mother.

"Now Nathan," said his mother calmly, "he's probably in your room hanging from the ceiling."

"Go and look for him again in your room," she said.

So Nate went back up to his room and started searching and probing his domain. Pants went one way, shirts another. Skis and books were torn from their rests in the closet. The once clean and perfect room turned in to a nightmare of chaos and destruction.

Nate could not find Ed anywhere. He turned around in a frenzy. There was Ed, sleeping calmly on the bed between some socks and a football.

It has been a month since Nate had totalled his room. He had never bothered to clean up his room. He had been really busy with football and playing with his two best friends, Ray and Jack.

"Nathan !" screamed his highly irritated mother, "when will you clean this pigstie you call a room?!"

"But I like it this way!" retorted Nate. That got Nate a week grounding.

"Hi," came a voice from the other side of the door. It was Ray. He bounded up stairs and went into Nate's room.

"You haven't cleaned it up yet?" exclaimed Ray. "You better clean it up fast. I just entered you the the, Clean Room Contest. The judges will be here in two days."

"You did what?!" yelled Nate. "Why would you do a stupid thing like that?"

"Well, you did have the cleanest, baddest room on the block," replied Ray. After a while Ray left and Nate had to start on his room.

Nate thought about it, he had two days to clean the room. He could hire a maid to do it. No, he didn't have any money.

"Well," said Nate. "I might as well clean it up. But first I need supplies. I need: gas masks (check) shovels (check) paint (check) and a miracle (a big one!).

Nate started with his dirty clothes. He got a big basket and shoveled them into it. Then he put back his skis and books into the closet. Nate soon transformed that atrocity of a room into a neat, organized room. As he finished dusting he heard his mother shout; "Nathan, the judges are here!"

Up came the judges. They inspected his room thoroughly and then awarded Nathan the first prize trophy.

Nate was so pleased with himself. A clean room helped Nathan win the coveted, Clean Room Award.

* * * * * *

VOICE-Middle

The following papers are pleasant and personable, but neither has that compelling voice that pulls the reader in. The tone is restrained and careful, but not passionate or strongly committed.

* * * * * *

Suprise Party

One day 2 of my friends and I were sitting around talking and all the sudden we started talking about Birthdays. One of my friends mentioned that hers was only about 10 days away. We asked her what her plans were, and she didn't have any. I got a great idea and decided to throw her a suprise party.

As soon as she went home my friend and I planned out all of the details. We decided that since Youth Group was such a fun place, we would have it there.

The ten days that we had went by very fast. The day before the party we went and got all the decorations and supplies that we would need. We had are Youth Directors plan out the night for us.

After school, Wednesday, the day of the party, we went to church early and decorated with a few other friends. When we were all done it looked great! We had ballons, streamers, and confedi everywhere. It was slowly getting closer to 6:30 which was when Sara was arriving. Everyone was racing around getting last minute things done and when we were all ready, everyone hid. I went downstairs and waited for her. As soon as I saw her pull up I walked her upstairs. As soon as I opened the door everyone jumped out yelling, "SUPRISE"!

Sara was so happy. I felt like I was a great friend and she still thanks me for the great suprise party we gave her!

* * * * * *

When buying t-shirts, sweatshirts, or other tops I always try to get positive slogans, sayings, titles, etc. . . I always feel better wearing something that's important to me.

One of my favorite slogans is, Save the Planet it's the only one we have. That one sentence can say a lot. I think that people should live their life the best way they can but that they should also help clean up the world they live in.

Other things can be made by the statement like, lets clean up our act and do something! We need to think about global warming, recycling, toxic wastes, and our ozone layer plus a whole lot more. Even though environmentalists are telling us more and more things about our earth most people don't do anything about it.

The planet is very important to me and I don't want my generation to grow up and live in a world thats any more polluted than it already is. I think that the slogan, Save the Planet it's the only one we have fits me and other people who care about our future.

* * * * * *

VOICE-Low

These papers are low in voice. Both recount what happened in a matter-of-fact, detached manner. The first writer manages to keep all emotions under wraps even when talking about a friend's close call at the edge of a cliff.

* * * * * *

It started out at camp when we were gowing for a hike, or a picnic

We were gowing to a place where there was a water fall. When we got there we all went over to the waterfall to look at it.

After we were done looking at the waterfall, we explored all around the waterfall. There was a place with all these rocks and it had water runing by the rocks.

One of the kids fell with one foot in butwean two rucks. In the hole there was a hornets nest or some kind of nest. They stong him alot of times and other kids. But I did not get stong. So we started back to the camp.

The kid that got stong a lot saw a quin bee coming tord him. There was a cliff next to him, and he started to fall down the cliff tring to get away from the bee.

I grabed him very fast and pulled him up so he wold not fall and die.

I felt real good about saving him and we had fun the rest of the day.

* * * * * *

The locker room

One day It was the same. There was hair spray flying every where. There were a lot of people awound the mirrors doing their hair. It was so crowded you couldn't even get by to go to the door to the hallway. It was so crowded I couldn't even do my hair that day. I was mad but I didn't say anything. But it wasn't so crowded the next day. I got to do my hair the next day. So I wasn't mad at all I was in a good mood. I was happy that my hair was fixed and that my hair wasn't messed up. I even got to put hair spray in my hair. People were asking other people for hair spray. I let them use some of mine. They said think you. They gave my it back and I put it in my bage. All the girl were happy that their hair was done. We were all happy. Then on lunch time a girl asked me for some hair spray so I went to my locker and got it for her so she can do her hair.

* * * * * *

WORD CHOICE-High

Strong verbs and precise nouns and modifiers characterize the performance in the following papers. Notice how easy it is to picture what each writer is talking about.

* * * * * *

THE DIRTY ROOM

The tall, lean boy hopped off the school bus with a jump. His hair was in disarray and his shoes untied. He walked up to a small, unsightly two story house and opened the door, tripping over his laces in the process.

"Hi" muttered a large, fat man lying on the couch with a beer in his hand. He was wearing a too small trucker T-shirt that read "Union Pacific Rebellious Dogs" on it.

"Hi pop" grumbled the boy to his father. He slipped out of the living room and into the kitchen. With the ease of an expert thief he opened the refridgerator and took a pop. He then instantly shot into his room and tried to avoid eye contact with his dad.

The room looked as if it was the New York City dump. His bright yellow lamp had a pair of underwear slung over it, and books and underwear were tossed from the window to his doorknob.

"Jeff, before you do anything else, you'll clean ya room!" barked a voice from the living room.
"But dad!" squeeked Jeff, maybe a little too rebelliously.

"Do it now." ordered the voice.

"All right! All right! I'm doin it." responded the boy.

He walked over to the lamp and picked off the underwear. It made a slight peeling sound as if it had been rubberized. Jeff remembered it had been tossed there when he had been sick.

Next, he walked over and took off the raincoat that had been left on his desk chair. He tried to ignore the green fungi on the sleeve, but failed to. Both the underwear and coat went down the dirty clothes chute, making an unpleasant slurping sound as they went down.
Seeing the remains of his ski weekend on the floor, he cleaned it up next. His sweater was dumped on the floor, and underneath a too small t.v. was a ski and a scarf

After putting away this mess, the boy was done. He strenghtened his desk and called it a day.

The boy plunked down on the desk chair and began to eat lots of Reeses Peanut Butter cups and watch television. As he did this, a pile began to form on the floor---

* * * * * *

The Picnic

The morning sun had fully risen and was at its highest point, and was shining right in my face. The blinding sun mixed with the incessant bleeping of the alarm clock was enough to wake up anybody.

I stumbled into the kitchen and ate breakfast, which consisted of a bowl of Lucky Charms and some milk. I then made my way to the bathroom, which was freezing, to take a shower, get dressed, and furnish my face. Then it was school time. I grabbed my field trip money and made a run for the school bus, barely making it on time.

"Class, class, CLASS!" yelled Mrs. Gundersun. "I hope you have all brought your field trip money." We all dutifully gave her our life savings. "The buses are here!" screamed Alice, my best friend. We all trampled each other out the door and loaded into the buses.

When we arrived, I was awe struck. There before us was the most beautiful meadow I had ever seen. It was a beautifull shade of light green with the yellow sun tinting it every so slightly. There were no blemishes or hills on this meadow, and the sides were gently sloped upward. Trees, about twelve feet high each, spread around the meadow in a complete circle except for a space for the entrance and the exit. Next was the most peculiar part of this meadow, there were rocks that jutted out the sides of the meadow, and provided exellent seat. Flowers were all over the place, and almost every type you could imagine! There were morning glories and tulips, marigolds and chrysanthemums, and violets and shooting stars just to name a few. There was a slight breeze blowing, and chipmunks peeked out of the trees here and there, daring to look for food.

"Lets eat!" shouted Brian. This was followed by the enthusiastic cheers of the fellow students so they rushed over to the coolers. Alice and I ran over to the slope and were the first to claim our rock-seats. Soon, everyone was scattered about the meadow, eating, talking, and laughing. We were all thouroghly enjoying ourselves, even the teachers. The meadow was soon filled with the delightful sound of laughter and merriment so the students, and teachers both, engaged in a hilarious game called human-pinball.

Later, after everyone had fully exausted themselves, we picked up our litter and made way for the bus. Everyone had quicky got on, but I stood there for a moment, savoring the enjoyment of the picnic. Alice came out to see if I was ready. I started to lumber onto the bus, but as I did, something caught my eye. I female white tailed deer had ventured out into the meadow.

I didn't tell anyone about the deer, but I made a silent promise to myself that I would someday return to this marvelous meadow, and have lunch there again.

* * * * * *

WORD CHOICE-Middle

These papers communicate on a functional level. The language may not be striking or memorable, but it gets the job done.

* * * * * *

A Surprise for Mr. Nelville

One sunny, clear day, I called Mr. Nelville to see if I could have a private violin lesson. His wife, Mary, told me he was in the hospital with kidney stones. He had recovered and was coming home tonight at five-thirty. I had a plan.

When I got home, I called my stand partner, and best friend, Anne. I told her about my plan. We were going to make a surprise dinner and welcome back party. She thought that was a terrific idea. I went over to her house and started brainstorming. We made a grocery list. Then we went to the store and got everything that we needed. We were ready to go over to his house and start getting ready.

First of all, we needed to cook and prepare an assortment of things. We made country fried chicken, soft mashed potatoes, brown gravy, soft, warm biscuits, herbal tea, and wonderful berry cobblers. We had quite a few food fights but the end product was delicous. We then set up a welcome back sign. We were all set and ready to surpirse him. We were hiding when suddenly a car drove up. We were so nervous. He came in and we yelled, "Surprise!" He was really happy. Yet, so were we. It felt really good to do this for him. The meal was absoulutely wonderful. He loved it so much he said he wished he could always come home to this.

I rememer this special surprise alot. It made me feel so good to do this for him. It made him feel lots better. You would not have believed the look on his face or mine.

* * * * * *

I don't think the cheerleaders at Middle School should have to wear their skirts to school. These skirts are made of red spandex with black spandex shorts underneath. They are not like regular cheerleading skirts.

Many cheerleaders have the same opinion as I do. We think it is unfair we are forced to wear our skirts. Especially since we never had the opportunitity to pick them out.

The other cheerleaders and I are very willing to wear our shirts with a pair of pants that are black, white or red (school colors). We don't want to seem unspirited so that is why we are willing to wear school colors.

During January and February it is very cold. Even if it's not raining or snowing, this makes it very hard to keep warm wearing a mini skirt.

The main reason I don't think it is fair we have to wear our skirts to school is that we are not given the right to vote. We are told we must wear them or we will be unable to dance.

The majority of cheerleaders don't really like the skirts. I don't mind wearing the skirt during our routine, just not to school. Next year I hope the dance/drill team will be given the opportunity to pick out and vote on whether or not they will wear their skirts to school.

* * * * * *

WORD CHOICE-Low

These two papers display different parts of problems with Word Choice. Imprecise language and redundancy trouble the first piece. In the second, the writer stretches too hard. Despite some nice moments at the outset ("fresh leathery scent," "flashing like a recently preased dime"), the piece is

soon mired down in language that is inappropriate and overblown. Notice, however, the strength of this writer's voice that shines through despite the problems with language.

* * * * * *

Slogan

Almost ever one wears T-shirts with slogans. Slogans are the main point of the T-shirt. My favorite slogan is Lakers. Lakers are my favorite team in Basketball thats why its my slogan.
L.A. Lakers is a slogan because everyone likes Lakers. It makes a good Slogan because it goes with T-shirts. I like the colors and how they make the L.A. Laker Slogan. It makes more people like me more.

I choose this slogan because it is a good slogan. Alot of people like me. Its my favorite team and Magic Johnson plays on the team. The Slogan is the only good one I like.

If T-shirts didn't have slogans probable no one would wear then. Eeveryone would wear sweatshirts. When they go to school everone would be hot. Slogans are the only way I like T-shirts. If T-shirts didn't have slogans I would where sweatshirts.

* * * * * *

Can't you hear it? It's the pounding of his hooves, caclomp caclomp clump clomp. I can just feel the thundering of his hooves with new rust resistant schoose on. His saddle all shined up with that fresh leathery scent and flashing like a recently preased dime. Can you see the the shimmering black velvatene of his coat and the way his long streeming hair just flowes through the midd summer breeze. This object of great power and grace is what I desire. Truthfully, haven't you ever wanted to obtain or possess something extra special. This towering brute wich I lust for is a hoarse.

I posses a field of green and brown, yellow and darkness. A feild of great length to which is reaches and it grows. Here there is a plentiful supply of greenery and water, for this creature and every creature to consume. I own a site for this black beauty to subsist, during the transformation of the seasons, from hot and sultry nights to winters snows and blitz.

The face you are sharing with me is one of concern and discourage. Is it because of the expense we would have to suffer through, well don't dispair. we can afford this great monstrosity of an animal. By working together we can create that extra little bit of suppliment.

What I am trying to say is a horse is a horse of course of course. They are great for work and for pleasure. Please, I desire a horse to love and to hold.

* * * * * *

SENTENCE FLUENCY-High

These papers show real strengths in Sentence Fluency. Read "Journey" aloud to appreciate the wonderful sense of rhythm and style this writer brings to a well-crafted story. The second-person perspective in the lunchroom piece may put some readers off; but notice the variety in structure.

* * * * * *

Journey

Gabe looked up. The sea was calm.

Had it all been a dream-the rough waters, the high winds, the rocking of the ship? As he pushed his sodden brown hair away from his face, he surveyed the cabin around him.

It was not a dream.

His clothes were everywhere, as if he'd scattered them carelessy around. Under the small portable television was a scarf and one of the new water skis he'd been given for his fourteenth birthday. When he opened the closet, all of the once neatly-stacked books fell into a pile on the floor. The whole room was damp, smelling of the sea.

From outside, on the ship's deck, a voice cried, "Gabe!"

When he got out on deck, he saw his mother crying, with the captain hovering nervously behind her. His little sister shelley was playing on the open deck, but every minute she would whimper and gaze sadly at the ocean.

"Gabe," his mother said in a choked voice, "Your father is missing."

The captain said gently, "Gabriel, you father is believed to be lost at sea. He was probably swept overboard during the hurricane."

Gabe just looked at them: his mother, golden hair unkempt, with red-rimmed eyes; the captain, kind but overbearing; Shelley, usually all sunlight and joy, but now with a cloud cast over her gaiety.

Gabe turned and ran.

The deep blue see seemed more alluring than the first day of their cruise, when they boarded in Miami. Shelley had laughed, watching waves wash up on the golden sand. His mother had smiled, enjoying Shelley's joie de vivre. Gabe himself had admired the gorgeous colors. His father, however, had shivered, telling Gabe that the sea had claimed too many lives to be celebrated. Now he was gone, lost in the depths of the Atlantic Ocean, that which had once seemed so playful and friendly.
"Shelley's been informed," the captain remarked quietly. "So have the other passengers."

Something inside Gabe swelled and burst.

"How can you talk about my father that way?" he demanded of the captain. "How can you take it for granted, the loss of life? This was my father, and yet you casually talk about him like, like . ."

The wave of anger ebbed.

All was quiet, the quiet after the storm.

"He's dead," Gabe murmured. "He's dead."

The pain had just begun.

Somewhere, a limp form sank gently to rest, for all eternity, on the ocean floor.

* * * * * *

It's almost noontime at Middle School. Anxious kids are watching the hands of the clock creep up to the "Big 12". Finally, the bell sounds! Things seem to move in slow motion as you rise from your desk. Freedom! The teacher shouts frantically for order, but you block her out as visions of soda and chips fill your brain.

Running for your locker, you grab your lunch and rush for the confusion of the lunchroom. As the doors slowly open, the mob moves in. Pushing and grabbing and shoving as we all crowd through the narrow doorway.

You stop to gasp for breath as the smell of green-pea-soup overwhelmes you. Then you rush for an empty seat next to friends. You all make room for another friend, or two?!?! Elbows dig into your side, as you try to lean back for air.

Dumping the contents of your bag on the table, you compare and trade with those around you. As you try to swallow the huge piece of twinkle you hoggishly crammed into your mouth, the cutest guy you've ever seen asks you for a drink of your fruit juice. You turn beet-red and scan the entire room for a nice, big hole to jump in. Since there isn't any conviently near you, you merely nod your head and silently proclaim all twinkles satanist. Gulp!! I can talk again!

Meanwhile the friend on your right side has eaten too much and is going to be sick, soon! You try to run, but can't squeeze out of your seat. You remind yourself to go on a diet for the millionth time! She burps, loudly, and forgets she was even sick. Disgusting, you lose your appetite quickly.

You spot someone eating chili and remind yourself not to sit with him in your next class. Also you tell him to scoot down on his bench, way down! But since there's no room, you sqeeze out. You trash your sandwich, and wait next to the garbage can for "Mr. Right." Here he comes! He speaks... "Could you please throw my pop can away for me?" You jump at the chance of a lifetime and throw it away.

Walking as in a dream you stuff your half-eaten pudding pop back into your locker, along with deo, gym shorts and dirty socks. You slowly walk back to class and wonder, could it all be a wonderful dream? No, if it was you wouldn't be hungry again!

* * * * * *

SENTENCE FLUENCY-Middle

These papers reflect a balance performance on the trait of Sentence Fluency. They show some variety in structure, but it's not a priority. Sentences are functional and readable, but not stylish and expressive.

* * * * * *

Children

"Come on, hurry up Sandy," I yelled. Sandy yelled back that she was coming. It was christmas time 1988, Sandy and I were loading gifts into the cars. We were almost ready to leave for Williams and deliver the gifts.

At last we had arrived at the church where the children were. My mother asked if Sandy and I would come help with the presents. We got the bags of presents and took them into the church, all the migrant children were waiting for us.

First we had all the children sit down so we could give them their gifts. As they opened the gifts the childrens eyes lite up. I had never seen a child so thankful for a coat, or boots, then I started to realize how lucky I was for all the clothes I had. I was holding a little three year old girl, who had recieved a doll that made her really happy. We had our pictures taken and put in the newspaper. After every child had opened thier gifts, it was time for us to go home.

This was an experience I will never forget. Seeing the childrens faces lite up is something I can't explain. I loved doing that and I would to it again for sure.

Eating Habits

Eating habits should be taken seriously. In the future if people don't eat smarter they might run into some fatal injuries. Eating healthy foods can make you look and feel better.

Most people, when they get home from school or work, grab something to eat, like a pop or some chips and "plop" down infrount of the T.V. Mabye they could try grabing a apple or an orange and a diet soda and "plopping" down infrount of the T.V. That, at least, would be a start.
Did you know that eating junk food can cause dull hair, and clogs up your arterees. I'm sure many people have suffered from a heart attack caused by junk foods. More people should be cautious about what they eat.

There are many different assortments of fruits, and vegetables. You will find that you can accomplish more and will be less tierd. Just try eating more healthy foods, and less snacks.

* * * * * *

If I had to choose a slogan to put on my shirt, it would probably say, "Peace in the Middle East," on the front and "Support the U.S. and allie troops, we love you guys," on the back.

My reason for putting this on my shirt is because I have quiet a bit of friends and relatives who I love very dearly and I don't want to see any of them get killed in the War. I hope everyone comes home soon and save to their families.

If people think that this is dumb to put this on a T-shirt, they should think twice for the reason I put in on there. The reason is, our American and allie troops mean a great deal to me and I don't want to see anything happen to them. I'm doing this to support the troops who are risking their lives to save the oil from Saddam Hussain.

We Love you guys

* * * * * *

SENTENCE FLUENCY-Low

In these papers, connectives like *and, so,* and *because* link ideas together endlessly, robbing sentences of power and purpose. Try reading these pieces aloud to experience the difficulty of having no built-in pauses. Each reflects a kind of continuous conversational style.

* * * * * *

A long time ago my friends and I went to a honted house after school. Im not talking about something somebody made up but this was a real one, but we couldn't go in because we were making jokes about what was going to be in the house because it looked like freddies house.

So we went there everyday but we couldn't get the guts to go in so we went home and took a nap and my friends went home and were talking about if they sould go in or not.

So the next day we went there and this time we went in and we started looking around for anything but I saw something move but nobody ealse saw it so no body believed me so I took off and waited outside and then I saw it agian and this time it had one of my friends I had to save him so I ran upstairs and grabed his hand and started pulling him away from the monsters grip and than he let go and both went fling backwards and than he started chasing me and I ran into a corner and hid there for a will and than I saw a shadow and looked out around the corner and it was my other friend and he saw me and ran as faced as he could to the front door and than it was me and I was stuck and he got closer and closer than I woke up!

* * * * * *

The slogan on my t-shirt would be "I'd rather be sleeping." because all the teachers give me home work, lots of home work, and by the time I'm done with it it's real late like English, she gives us vocabulary words which definitions are real long, and then the math teacher gives us some wierd math that is kinda hard, then my spanish teacher would give me a couple pages were we have to make a total spanish sentence for about twenty words or so, and thats why I'm allways tired, and thats why "I'd rather be sleeping."

* * * * * *

CONVENTIONS-High

Notice how easy these pieces are to read; skillful use of conventions makes reading a pleasure. Each piece shows signs of thoughtful editing. In particular, note how well each writer coordinates paragraph structure with dialogue.

* * * * * *

"You better have your room cleaned by the time I get back Mike!" my mom yelled up the stairs.

"Yea, yea, yea." I muttered from my messy room. I heard the door slam and started for the door of my room. "I'm not staying here!" I wispered

Suddenly the door slammed.shut. I looked around my room slowly to see what or who made that happen. An old sock jumped up right in front of me and dusted its self off.

"I must be dreaming!" I yawned casually.

"This is no dream kid! Your room is so messy that it's hard for us footwear to survive!"

"Ah give me a break!" I muttered.

"Actually, I think I'll just give you a zap from my gun."

As I turned for the door the sock took out a ray gun and zapped me. One second later I was tiny. Real tiny. There I stood on the rug, all alone. I looked toward the door. It seemed a mile away. I slowly looked at my surroundings. Everything was about 20 times bigger than me. Suddenly I hear a noise behind me.

"Uh oh." I wispered to myself.

About 15 old dirty socks were shuffling toward me. I was surrounded. The leader with the ray gun spoke out.

"Look kid, you can make this real easy on yourself. You can clean room and make life better for us footwear. Or you can sit on you behind everyday and get socked by us. Your choice kid."

I pondered over the choices. My heart started to beat faster. I tried making a break for the door but all the socks dogpiled onto me.

"Ok ok! I'll clean my room!" I managed to squeak out.

"Good choice kid." the leader sock said.
Half a second later I was back to my regular size. I slowly started cleaning my room while mumbling to myself.

"Why me. Why me."

* * * * * *

Half A Day In A Life Of A School Kid

I sat straight up in my seat. Not knowing what had just happened, I got up and gathered my books. My bag was really heavy and my feet seemed to carry me right out to the school bus. Then it struck me, I was out of school!

"Allright!" I exclaimed as I got on to the yellow bus that I had come to know so well. I was going home now, and it felt like no one could stop me.

It seemed like forever and a day, but finally I got home. I opened the huge door to my house and stepped in, and there stood my mother.

"Hi, honey." she said, "Did you have a good day?"

"Sure." I stated quickly.

I went to my room and closed the door. Throwing my tired body on to the bed, I almost instantly fell asleep.

I didn't know how long it was, but it couldn't have been too long after I drifted off. I heard mother call.

"Adam, clean your room!" my mother screamed.

I did not answer, in hopes that she would go away, but, regardless,

"Now!" she yelled loudly, that is what fully woke me up--

"Look at this, there is stuff everywhere."

"I'm sorry, but I do the best I can. Do I have to clean it now?" I asked politely.

"Ya certainly do young man!" mother snapped. "Why is your underwear on the lamp?"

"Well..."

"When your room looks like a tornado struck, it just makes me really mad."

"But the cat and the dog and Paul, they all come into my room and mess things up." I whined.

"I'm sorry, i'll talk to Paul, but you'll have to keep the door closed for the cat and dog. Please clean your room." said said softly, explaining.

"Okay." I mumbled.

It took me the rest of the day to clean my room, but I completed the task. I went down to see my mom.

"I'm done!" I announced.

"Great!" she said, "come sit down."

I sat close to my mother. She leaned over and kissed me.

"I love you" she told me in that soft motherly voice.

"Me too." I whispered. It was the end of a day, another half a day in the life of a school kid.

* * * * * *

CONVENTIONS-Middle

These papers reflect a balance of strengths and weaknesses in Conventions. Each writer does many things correctly, and the papers show signs of light editing. But problems with spelling and capitalizing stand out in the first; the second has problems with spelling, capitalization, extra words popped in, punctuation left out. Also, where are the paragraphs? Moderate editing needed here.

Ringggg!, a school bell breaks the deathly silence of the hall. All to soon the doors blast off the class rooms, hungry teen agers bursting into the hall. It's Lunch time!, you try to run but it's hopeless the teen tidal wave catches up with you and engulfs you. Regaining your senses you dive for your locker, let's see 14-2-22 bingo your in!, toss your book in and slam the door shut. Then you join in a foot race that ends when you get around the corner and come into view of the principal. Imediatly you declerate and enter the cafitieria.

A thunderous roar greets you thousands of loud teenagers all talking at once with their mouths full! You then fight your way to the lunch line. And Give the lady wearing the paper bag on her head the ticket. Blue and crisp when you bought it this morning now grey and wrinkeld.
Quickly you grab a puke green marbled with orange tray, then you move along the line not shure what's being piled on your plat.. Finally! your through the line you look around for a seat, only one left waaay at the end. Walking as fast as you possibly can you hot foot for the seat. Made it!, calmly sitting down you look at what's on your plate: 1 greasy hamburger, oily fries, a warm milk shake, and 40 year old fruit cocktail.

* * * * * *

As you can tell by the way my clothes are all over my room and my books are cramed into every wich place, and my pet lizard Ed is out of his cage that my room is pretty messy. It hasn't always been this way. My room used to be quite clean. My bed was made, my clothes hung up, or folded in my dresser, and my books on the self. Untill one day when I was getting ready for bed I noticed that my pet lizard Ed was out of his cage. Well I knew if my mom found out she would flip and I would have to give Ed away. So I went to go pick him up. I was not but 5 inches from him when he took off running. First he ran up my book shelf just out of my reach so I put my foot on the first shelf and pushed myself up. I had just about reached him when I heard a crack and before I could jump off the shelf broke and Books fell to the groud with a noise that was so loud it scared Ed. He ran down from the top shelf, but instead of, but instead of trying to catch him I jamed all my books into my closset. By now I was kind of hot so I took off my swetter and threw it to the floor, but I was still hot so I took off my shoes and socks and threw them across the room amazingly my sock stuck to the wall. The case was on we ran around the room till it was hat and humid so I had to open my window but it wouldn't stay open so I put one of my schoolbooks in it. I was just about to go get Ed when my door flew open.

"Mom!!" I yelled as she stepped in my room she looked aroud as if amazied and yelled at the top of he lungs.

"Your grounded, and CLEAN YOUR ROOM!" and left slamming the door behind her

I looked at Ed. Ed looked at me. He knew he had won and laid down to sleep.

I was tierd from all that running around and kind of depressed for being grounded so I laid down and whent to sleep next to Ed. That's how my room got so dirty.

* * * * * *

CONVENTIONS-Low

Problems with Conventions make these papers difficult to read. It may be necessary to read one to decode, then again for meaning--or at least to pause frequently to figure out what's being said. Each has a message to convey, but extensive editing would be required to prepare these pieces for publication.

* * * * * *

One day I was walking down the street. There was no one around it was pretty wired. I turned the quarner and there was a tareble car reck. I ran all over town looking for help. I founed phone and I diled 911. They answered and I said I need help.

They told me to stay calm I said ok. First of all they asked me where the askdent is at. I did not bother to look at the street sighns. I got the street names. I ran back to the phone I told the oparator where it was at. She asked me if any one was hert I said yes.

I was told to go back to the reck and wate for the help to arrive.

* * * * * *

Dear, Mom

I think it was unfair of you to accus me of Breking your favoret crisstell glass. When I DiDn't Break it, And you say I have to prov it well I can. If you wouldn't treat me unfairly, and stop Blamin me Becaus I the yougest for instains iF you look at the evidents like the glass was filt whith Blue Barry koolaid when it was Broken .and I hate Blue Barry kool Aid. Jennifer loves it. There for It couldn't of Bin me.

If you want more Prof then hear it is. For one thing I can't reach the crisstell glasses it mak it impossa Bull for me to get a glass in the first Place. All so my hand were greesy from working on one car whith DaD. If you notice my glass has milk in it and was all Blac which grees. The cristel glass DiDn't have any gres on it.

What I'm try ing to say hear is. IF you look at the evidens carfully you will see that I coudnt of Brokenyour glass. There for I think that you automaticly just Becaus I are yougest, assumed that I Brok your grass. The only fair thing to Do is to let me off one hook, and ground Jenniffer for lying to you. By Denning that she ever saw the glass and leting me thak the Blam. that is iF want to Be a fair mom. Well I'm gowing to leve it up to you, But I hop this letter has Help you even if you doun't like Being rong.

Sinserly

8th GRADE STUDENT PAPERS - MODES

DESCRIPTIVE-High

The following papers are wonderfully Descriptive. If a familiar aroma has ever taken you back to an early memory, you will certainly identify with the first example--and its rich appeal to *many* senses. Note the striking contrast, too. The second sample is also vivid, in a quieter way. The third writer carefully selects just those critical details that bring the scene to life.

* * * * * *

Entering the busy lunch room, I am struck by the contrast of this place and a place where at a younger age I would spend my noon times. If I close my eyes I can once again relive the happy times at this place, the sights, the smells and the feelings. As I first close my eyes I can see the inside of the house.

Sunlight floods through windows so spotless it is hard to see them at all, like a cup of light spilled over. The clean white walls sparkle. Although the furniture is never dusty in the literal sense, I always thought of it as dusted by years of memories, just as all the house is, a dust compounded by hundreds of perfect mornings like this one. After I got past the sights of the room another of my senses is aroused as various smells meet my nose. There was always a smell of baking, pies, cookies, bread, rolls as there is today. I can also smell warm soup and other tantalizing lunch items cooking on the back of the old stove. There is also the smell of grandma's rose perfume mingling with the delicious smell of the food. Besides the outward feelings that I have, I am overwhelmed by emotions brought about by this place.

A feeling of over all well-being washs over me like a great wave as I recieve a hug from grandma. I feel at peace and full of content. This place is like a haven, a port in the storm of life's troubled waters, to enter is to be made stronger. Here I feel as if nothing can hurt me.

I am jostled roughly ahead into the line. I open my eyes and look up into the face of an angry 9th grader. The world is hostile, the cafeteria cold and the lunch being served is unappetizing. Grumpy cafeteria workers growl from the kitchen, kids argue about where to sit as chairs rattle and trays crash brutally. But I have been heartened by my momentary relapse into memory. I smile pleasantly at the 9th grader. Surprised, he smiles back. Memories of my grandmother and a special noon time long ago are helping me through another tough day.

* * * * * *

Table For Five

I'm walking down the hallway as fast as my legs can carry me. People are around me on every side. This isn't a protest or a marching band, this is the race to get in line for lunch. I slow down as I see Mr. Edwards grab a running boy and pull him off to the side to scold him. Next I rush into the cafeteria, throw my bag over towards my seat at a table, and dash into line. I grab my usual meal of a hot dog, spicy fries, and milk. I casually walk to where my overturned bag lies on the ground next to a stool. Mitch, a new boy is already there and he smiles at me from across the table. Casey strolls in, drops his bag, and sits next to Mitch. After opening his brown bag he lets out a mournful cry and pulls out a mangled peanut butter sandwich.

"Want to trade sandwiches?" he asks and he always get the same reply.

"No way," says Bret as he bumps Mitch out of his seat to talk to me. "It looks toxic," he says. Casey searches his bag for a candy bar or crackers. He lets another cry, this time softer than before.
I guess that the table is regular but the people sitting at it aren't. We're a special group at lunch, a special group of friends. Everyday that I buy lunch I get spicy french fries. I don't like them but my pals do. I suppose that I buy them for everyone around me and not myself.

"Do something with the food," says Collin who comes and sits next to me. I am labeled the entertainer of our group and so everyday I collect the food people do not want. For instance today I took Casey's orange, Collins's carrots, and Bret s catsup. I jammed the carrots into the unpeeled orange one by one. Then I held it up and made a story about it. I had said it was a mysterious object that had killed five people. I then proceeded to spread catsup over it as if it were blood. By this time the whole table was laughing at it. I enjoy doing things to make people laugh so I really look forward to lunch.

Collin is always the first to leave. He wants to get into some basketball games in the gym. Kevin walks over to our table every other day and asks the same question.

"Can I borrow a quarter?" sometimes he gets lucky. Mostly he ends up moving on to the next table.

At last I finish and trash my lunch. I walk down the hall dragging my bag and placing it in front of my next class. I pass the cafeteria and meet my friends coming out. We wonder the hall telling jokes and waving to friends. Tomorrow the cycle starts over. I can't wait.

* * * * * *

Lunch Time

At lunch time the cafiteria is usually the noisiest place in the school. When the high blare of the eagerly awaited lunch bell reaches the hungry ears of the enthusiastic, on the edge of their well deserved forty five minutes of freedom.

It seems as though that one lunch bell sets off an amazing chemical reaction within the hyperactive body's of the teenaged students. The sound of the bell seems to set off an adrenalin boost that usually lasts only fifty to fifty-five minutes.

Here at our school when the bell rings the omnipresent silence in the halls is broken by the loud low pitiched murmur, and an occational yell or scream. For around two minutes thats all you hear, then all within a minute around four hundred lockers are slammed.

It's odd, if your one of the first three or four people in the cafiteria you can hear the second by second rise in volume of the students. One person can't hear another so they talk louder till allmost every one is yelling.

People yelling and laughing and talking all around you. It's as though the walls are closing in on you. The food raining over your head from misplaced shots landing on you like a Scud to Isreal when it lands in the Mediterainian sea.

Then theres also the "voltures" coming around begging and picking. "Can I borrow five cents," and "can I barrow a dime?" And sometimes more! And you know that if you do you'll never see that money again.

With all the comotion that goes on at lunch it's a wonder anything gets eaten. The Cafetria is certainly the noisiest place in the school.

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DESCRIPTIVE-Middle

In this mid-level example, the reader gets a solid general impression, but not the telling little details that would set this scene apart from any other.

* * * * * *

At our junior High, we look forward to lunch because we get a break from all our classes. At lunchtime you can eat hot or cold lunch. When you get your hot lunch you have to stand in a line and can't chew gum. There is a table where most of the girls sit, where they eat and talk in the cafeteria. In the cafeteria there are lots of tables and there is a stage. On the stage the janitor will announce birthdays and other stuff like that. There is always music from Z100 or Q105 playing, but its not very loud. There are always two teachers selling milk in the corner of the cafeteria.

When you are done eating you can go walk the halls and talk to your friends and goof off. The counselor and the principal and a few other teachers are always in the watching the kids. Some kids have lunch detention if they get in trouble. They have to sit by the office until the 5 minute bell rings, and then they can go get there books just like everyone else does when the 5 minute bell rings. Then we get ready to go to the next class.

* * * * * *

DESCRIPTIVE-Low

These two examples offer facts, but almost no Descriptive detail. What *is* there is well known to a reader who has visited a school lunchroom before. This writer has yet to venture beyond the obvious, to pick out the details that show an observing writer's mind at work.

* * * * * *

Riley school at lunch is really very boring, we don't have anything to do, there are 3 place's to go and eat. our lunch is open campus, It starts at 11:45-12:20. All of the kids are running around screaming like 2 year olds and its very noise. We do have a cafeteria and there are 3 vending machains and some tables. That is what are lunch time is like.

* * * * * *

Our school eats lunch in the activity center. It is probably about 8 average size class rooms. There are lots of tables and chairs. There is about 225 students. The activity center has a drinking faucet, a school store, and 2 restrooms, one for the boys and one for the girls. There are also about 250 lockers. The activity center also has a small bulletin baord. There are also pairs of doors. There is also a clock, bell. and fire bell.

* * * * * *

NARRATIVE-High

These papers received high scores in the Narrative mode. Both tell a complete story, setting up the problem first, then bringing it to resolution. Notice that neither paper is strong in Word Choice or Conventions. Yet each has a sense of strong narrative writing. Both have moderately strong voice.

* * * * * *

I remember one day when I was really proud of my self, Becouse I did somthing for my Mom. Last Christmus my Mom and Dad wher right in the middle of a horible divorce. things wher not going well, my Mom and Dad wher allways in fights, it was not a pretty sight. I was living with my mom and whenever I would see her she was depressed and was not her ushawol self, allways complaning about how the house was never clean or how our Dad was ripping us off in the divorce. she was just allways complaning about somthing. So I decided to chear her up but I couldn't think how, finely it hit me, I would clean up the house. But I just couldn't find the time, I'would try but it was so messy it just wasn't werking. finely Christmus was her so I decided to stay up all night Christmus night and do it right and I did. I dusted, I stratened everything up and becouse the vacume was to loud I yoused the dust buster. I washed all the dishes by hand, it was much quieter than the dish washer. By the time I was done it was 5:30 a.m. and the house was perfect. I hadn't sean it that clean scence we moved in. And that was clean. So clean I took a picture. But the real shock was when my mom woke up, just to see her smile like that it was just about the happyest I had ever sean her in six monts And that really made me feal good.

* * * * * *

I can remember in the 5th grade, there was a kid named James. He was a overweight kid that was never liked by the other children. He tried to play ball with the other boys but nobody every picked him, and if he did get picked he never touched the ball. James tried to make friends but nobody wanted to be near him or even seen next to him. When ever the guys every talked to James it was always some put down. I never picked on James because I always put my self in his position. I can remember how mad I was when they made fun of him.

One day my angry came out. I just couldn't hold it in any more. Scott was trying to spit on James. I told him to leave him alone but he didn't listen. So, I screamed it out loud, and Scott told me to get lost. James couldn't believe what I was doing and neither could the other kids. I told Scott that he was a idiot for picking on James, and if he didn't stop I was going to pick on him. He asked me why I was sticking up for a nerd like James. I repleyed loud and said, "Because he has feelings that you don't even care for." He told me that I made a mistake for sticking up for a guy like James. Then I thought he was going to hit me instead he turned around and walked over to the line and that ended it. That made me feel good.

* * * * * *

NARRATIVE-Middle

These papers tell what happened, but still need some work. The first is a collection of interesting events that do not yet go together to form a story--though there may be many stories buried in what this writer has said so far. The second has a sketchy storyline, but needs a stronger sense of order; it tells the whole story, then retells it, so we have no building to a high point.

* * * * * *

There was something that I did just last summer that made me feel very proud of myself. I signed up for Safety Town because I wanted to help kids and teach them about street safety, and house safety. I also needed something to build up my self-confidence.

When I went to be a teen leader at safety town I helped about five children to learn their address, phone number, emergency numbers, I also helped them with learning to cross the street, car safety, fires, and many other safety tips.

What this also did was teach me how important safety is to a child. It also made me feel very good inside because I know quite a bit of sign language and I got to work with two deaf kids in my group. So that made me feel good. While I was working with these kids I knew that I was going to make a difference in their lives.

I really think this was a good experience for me and the children there. For me I got to meet kids my own age plus I made friends with the kids in my group. As far as the children that that came they made many new friends too. The safety town class may just save one of their lives some day, and I will know that I am the one that helped them learn that. That is a really good feeling.

* * * * * *

Once upon a time long long ago I did something that made me feel good about myself. I mowed the lawn for free. Usually I charge about five dollars but that particular day I happened to feel good so I did it for free. My mom usually has to ask me to do things like that but I did it without being asked and I felt good about myself that day.

What happened was, one night I went to bed early and got up the next morning pretty late like nine-o-clock and I felt good, because I wasn't tired. I went into the kitchen and ate breakfast. As I was eating, one of my friends called and wanted me to go downtown. So I decided, so my mom would say that I could I would mow the lawn.

After I got done with the lawn I went and asked if I could go downtown. My mom, she said no. Then I went to my room and turned on the radio. All of a sudden I got an idea. I wouldn't ask for any money. So I went and told her

that, she said that if she had known that I did the lawn she wouldn't of said no. She was going to ask me to do the lawn later on that day. I got to go downtown and felt good about what I did.

* * * * * *

NARRATIVE-Low

These writers are still searching for a central idea. The result is a mixed bag of brief sketches, but no central storyline. Notice that each has an introduction and a conclusion, but that they do not serve to set up or resolve any problem or conflict, as they would in a strong narrative.

* * * * * *

Experiences At Saving People

I've done a few things to help people when they where in trouble. When I do I feel good afterwards. I think the reason is, is I feel I've given someone another chance with their family and friends.

One time I remember was when I saved a kid from getting hit by a car. What happend was this kid was crossing the street. At the same time a car was comming. So I dove to save his life.

Another time I remember was when my mom cut her finger. What happend was my mom was cutting a steak and she cut her finger. It was bleeding alot. So I wrapped it in a towel to stop the bleeding. She ended up being alright.

Well as you can see I've saved a few people. And I fell pretty good after I do to. So overall as you can see I enjoy helping people whenever I can.

* * * * * *

I remembered one time whene I gave somebody money for food. His face was so happy. I felt good about my self. But it turned out to be he was a thif.

There is one other time whene I for got my money for the Bus. The Bus driver was nice enogh to let me go by.

When you do something good you feel good about yourself. Because you did something to help somebody and there all happy.

You'll never know. Maybe the same person will help you whene you need help.

* * * * * *

IMAGINATIVE-High

Strong Imaginative writing is original and fresh; it lets you relax and "buy in" to the writer's world. Relax and enjoy the tale of the obsessive "neat-freak" turned teenager--and the story of the dreaded Messy Room Police. Could they be after you next?

* * * * * *

"The Change"

My parents always tell about how I used to be when I was younger, about 3 years to 7 years. All parents do this, but mine dwell on it! My mother sometimes begins to weep as she recounts the days of my youth. How cute I was with

a dutchboy haircut and sparkling, white trousers. My father tries to comfort her. But it is of no use, she blames herself for what happened. Actually it was neither of my parents influence which caused the metafastation you see before you today.

Unlike other kids my age I was unusually tidy. I had an obsession with perfection! Cleanliness was my motto. My bedroom was spotless! There wasn't any peanut butter smeared on the walls drawing flies and you could see the color of the floor, yellow! Picture in your mind clean clothes folded neatly in the drawers, mothballs in the wool sweaters, and the bed made every morning! My parents adored me. They bragged to their friends. Their friends in turn told thier childred that they should follow my example. You can imagine how well liked I was at school!

All of that has since changed. When I was nearing my 8th birthday I had my first taste of how the other half lived. While I was at school, saying hello to the teachers and completing my assignments and turning them in on time, it had begun to drizzel. The ground became soggy, turning the road into pools of swirling, sticky mud. The sky looking like a battlefield, the clouds and rain overcoming the sun.

My father had always told me to face my fear, so I had begun to walk home through the storm. The storm itself wasn't that bad, but the mess it made was. I soon realized as I trudged along that dirt wasn't that terrible, in fact I liked it. My white Nike's became brown, my hair hung in my eyes, and my clothes were wet and soiled.

Over the next couple years, I slowly sank into the abyss of lazyness and filth. My parents tried to set me in the right direction again by showing me pictures of my clean bedroom, for it wasnt' clean anymore! The polished woodwork become dull and dusty. The floor, well there wasn't one, just a mass of scattered clothes, toys, and uneaten food. I threw everything anywhere, socks hanging over the lampshade, homework under the bed, and mice in the closet! The onset of my disheveled appearance was gradual, but it came. My bedroom and myself are now the victims of the teen age years.

* * * * * *

"Wake up kid, you're coming with us," a man in a black suit and white ruffly apron demanded. Oh gosh Messy Room Police! My room was messy, yes but not messy enough to call the Messy Room Police, I thought hurredly throwing on my bathrobe.

As the man grabbed me by the arm to carry me away, we passed by my sister, standing in the doorway of her Imaculally clean room, smiling so I shot her an evil look as I was drug past her.

The Messy Room Police station was the Epitamy of cleanlieness, smelling of disinfectants and wet paint. While being led to the questioning room, I saw the lines of people In thir bathrobes listening to Muzac and reading Magazines like Better Homes and Gardens and Country living. They liked to make it an enjoyable experience while waiting to be questioned.

"Name?"

"Burt Wiley"

"Age?"

"15"

"Sit down Wiley...tell me, how Is It that you got here," Inquired the Inspector?

"Well, I don't have much choice inspector.....Well, no sir," I surrendered, "I know."

"Then how, Wiley," Interogated the Inspector?

"Okay. Well It all started when mom Invited the Earlanders to spend the weekend at our house so they were to sleep In my room. My room naturally looked similar to the Black Hole of Calcutta, so, My closet being Really big, I just shoved everything into my closet, Even Ed, my lizard. Anyways, after that, My closet started to show signs of explosion, so, I put my desk In front of my closet door and everything was fine, all weekend that is.."
"Meaning?" sighed the Insepctor.

"Meaning, after the weekend was over, I remembered, I forgot the feed Ed. So, like a fool I moved the desk away from the door and the door burst open, showering my room with old, dirty clothes and food, and even 13 year old library books.

"Hmmm...," the Inspector pondered. "Sounds like you've got a big mess to clean up boy. I think we'll let this go, but just this once. You can go on home now, but don't let me catch you in here again."

"Okay Inspector. thanks," I heaved. What a relief. Walking out the door I saw the messy room violators, enjoyably waiting to be interogated. I think Ed is going to make a guest appearance in my sisters bed tomorrow morning!

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IMAGINATIVE-Middle

These papers both show some real promise. The first, in particular, has quite a lot of Voice. Each creatively--but very plausibly--explains how the messy room got that way. What's missing is that flight of individualized fancy that lifts both writer and reader out of the world of the familiar and predictable.

* * * * * *

Messy Tessie

Messy Tessie Jones is so untidy that sometimes when you walk into the muddled mess she calls her bedroom, you think that a nuclear bomb has landed right straight in the middle of her bedroom. There are clothes scattered throughout the whole room: sweaters half-way stuffed in drawers, shoes and socks tossed on to her bed and chairs, and even sweaty gym clothes that have been lazily dropped on the floor in hopes that some magical "dirty clothes fairy" will fly by and carry her clothes to the washer. Messy Tessie (that's what her friends, including myself, call her) has not been untidy her whole life. Up until about two months ago when basketball season started, she had been a somewhat neat and clean person. You see, Messy Tessie is a sports fanatic and she devote all of her time to her favorite sports which include swim team, tennis lessons, softball, year-around soccer, and now basketball. Tessie just recently made the "A" basketball team and they practice every weeknight after school and have games every Saturday. Lately it seems as though she has almost no time to eat, sleep, or even think about cleaning her room. **Maybe** next month when basketball is over she'll have time to clean her room. But who's complaining? Certainly not Messy Tessie Jones.

* * * * * *

I Just Don't Understand!

I really tried not to let my room get this way, but it just....happened.!

It all started Monday night when I came home from school. I had been putting off my reading homework, and had finally decided to read it before I went to bed. I turned on my lamp, only to discover the new bulb my mom had put in was too bright. I scanned the room for a solution. I soon found something just right, a pair of underwear. I picked them up and draped them over the lamp. Perfection!

Tuesday the weather was damp and cold, so I had worn a raincoat and sweater to school. When I got home, I found that my sister had taken all my hangers for her clothes. So, instead of taking them back, I just layed my dripping raincoat over my chair, and tossed my sweater on the floor in the hall. As for my sister, I took some of her tapes and hid them in my closet. Then stacked a bunch of books in it, so they would fall on her when she opened the door. After doing this, I noticed that the chair my coat was on had become soaked, and was starting to smell. So I wedged a workbook in my loose window, which is my only one, to let the smell out.

Wednesday and Thursday were just as bad, if not worse. I had shoved a ski and scarf under my TV to remind me to watch a skiing program I had been planning on. Also, I had accidently rubbed a croyon into the carpet and thrown a vest over it to hide it, left my pants hanging on the door so I would remember to get them washed, and started a modern art project on my wall, which consisted mainly of sticking sweaty socks to it, that I had totally forgotten about.

Friday was the worst day of them all though. I had emptied my lizards tank to change the rock, and forgotten to put him back in. Every time I would try to grab him, he would just scatter off into another corner of the room.

So, now I hope you can see how this incident might have occured. I mean, it could have happened to anyone. It wasn't really my fault . . . . . was it?

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IMAGINATIVE-Low

These writers offer matter-of-fact explanations for the messy room, and the first provides a good bit of description as well, but neither writer seems to be writing for the purpose of entertaining, engaging or surprising the reader.

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Messy Room

this descibes a messy room clothes are everwhere and hanging on the door underwear are on your bed post. socks in the closet your smelly dog liying on your bed, moldy food on your desk spelt pop on your floor. your school books all trashed in the closet. Shoes all muddy on your desser. Dog food all over the wall. your window is broken, clothes piled up clear to the top. one year old covers on your bed that have not been washed. radio and TV on the floor screwed up because pop spiled on them, pictures of girls on the wall but have any taks in the wall so there on the floor. your leather jacket has two week old cheese in its pocket, your dog cant go out to go to the bathroom because the dirty clothes wont let him, your floor is full of food. the insect come to eat off the floor. Spider weps all over the place. died flies because the door is closed shut because of the clothes well this is my story about a messy room.

* * * * * *

My Room

"Mom i finished cleaning My Room"

Three days Latter. My mom Told me to put a Blaket away. I just throw it on My floor. The next Moneing i couldint find any thing to were. so I opend My doore and start to tose close out tell I found something i Liked. That night i did My homework in My Room. and i pushed ever thing off My bed on to the floor two days Latter I baby sat a one year old baby who took ever thing off My Tub and just about eat Spuky my hammster. so I put Spuky away and didnt pick up my Room. The nixt day My cusin cume over and played dolls in My Room and skusers stuff anumas all over My Room. and that how My Room got Messy.

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PERSUASIVE-High

These papers scored high in Persuasive Mode. The first is particularly strong. It takes a clear stand, never waffles, offers extensive and varied support--and even considers the viewpoint of the opposition (young workers might quit their jobs more often). For a non-researched piece, very nicely done. The journalism piece suffers a little from redundancy, but this minor problem is outweighed by strengths in forceful tone and clear expression of support. "The Immortal Socrates..." takes a tongue-in-cheek approach that is persuasive enough to leave many readers wondering if they take themselves too seriously.

* * * * * *

Are you fourteen and looking for an after-school job? If so, you probably know the you can't get one. Sure, you can get a permit when you're fourteen, but what good is that if you can't get a job until you're sixteen. Permit and job ages are conflicting and its proposed itself as a problem to most fourteen year olds. Something needs to be changed.

Laws today put too many restrictions on fourteen year old employees. The laws state that a fourteen or fifteen year old can only work a couple of hours a day. That is, if you can find a job. These unfair laws also limit the jobs these young adults can do.

Also, if you are lucky enough to find a job, the salaries are very low. When paychecks are passed out its hardly worth the time and effort you've put into it. Of coarse there is always the paper route, berry fields, or babysitting. However, if you look at it, These jobs are harder work than most other jobs and they pay alot less.

I also believe that if the government was to give fourteen year olds more jobs, it would keep lots of them off the streets after school and on weekends. Which, in turn, would quite possibly lower the drug use and crime rate in most of the cities here in Oregon. Changing the law would allow more kids to go to college. With a job they could save for college and not leave it to parents or have to wait and try to pay their way through. Not to mention there would be more taxes coming out of more paychecks, which would mean better communities.

However, I can see the government and business owners point of views. There would be a great fear of young workers not being able to hold a job or a fear of them quiting frequently. Of coarse there are going to be a few, but I think for the most part fourteen and fifteen year old adolescence would be eagerly inclined to do a good job.

The working laws need some serious help. They need to be changed. They need to give fourteen and fifteen year olds the option to be employed on a regular work schedule with regular wages. I feel we are not only willing but competent enough, by far, to perform most of the work tasks of everyday jobs. Something, somewhere, somehow needs to be changed.

* * * * * *

Ads; To Be, Or Not To Be?

Last week, my Journalism teacher asked permission of the district press manager to sell advertisements in the school paper. We were turned down. Apparently the district press manager does not feel Raber Students are mature enough to handle advertisements.

I disagree completely. I can think of several reasons why we should be allowed to sell ads. First off, the School paper needs the money. Raber students are mature enough to handle ads. Plus, ads would help journalism prepare for the real world of journalism.

Raber's paper needs the money ads would bring in. We could probably sell six to eight ads per issue at $25.00 an ad. That could come to a considerable sum of money. Considering the budget cuts faced by the School, advertisement money could go a long way in bridging the financial gaps.

Contrary to popular belief, Raber students are mature enough to handle ads. We're not little children, we're choice making teenagers. We have dealt with ads all are life. I wonder why the press manager got worried now. I seriously doubt that any harm would come to the student body as a result of advertisements.

The introduction of ads into the paper would help journalism students prepare for the real world of journalism. In journalism, students have to learn that money isn't just going to materialize for their use. Putting in ads would teach students things like budgeting and financial conservation. Currently, the school paper seems nothing like a real one. Of course, it's not expected to be, but ads would help ad a little touch of realism. The high-school of which Raber is a feeder has a School paper with ads. Teaching students advertisement techniques earlier would give them an edge in high School. I would be benificial if students dealt with ads earlier in their Scholastic "careers".

Ads are something every human will deal with some time in life. Therefore, it would be a mark in the plus colum for ads to be placed in the School paper.

* * * * * *

The Immortal Socrates Said, "I Drank What?"

Dear United Nations Secratary General,
People walk down the corridors of the giant metal skyscraper. They walk single file and spread out at the elevators. Does that sound boring or what!? That is a monotone lifestyle. Today, the population is too serious. Nobody seems to take a risk because they're afraid they will stand out. Where would we be without creativity and risk-taking anyways!?
The general public doesn't want to risk being an outcast. Those people need to lighten up. I consider myself to be pretty weird. I watch the home shopping channel for fun and not too many people have Howard Phillips or Michael Katz as an idol. No one seems to want to change their ways. They're just being cowards!

I know, you're busy with the crisis in the gulf but it could all be solved if we release bombs full of laughing gas! That may sound stupid and absurd but so am I. I'm not trying to put myself down but I'm different! I take risks and they work to my benefit.

Being less serious doesn't take much practice and it has big payoffs. A good comedian can make tones. Good artists can be millionaires. Inventors, Magicians, Architects, Engineers, et cetera. They all are creative risk-takers. They are glad to be different and people admire them!

"Super" Dave Osborne is a wonderful risk-taker. He's made a lot of money doing what he wants to! I like things like his show because they're different.

In all seriousness however, don't be serious! Be original, try new things, do what you want to regardless of what other people say. Try taking the stairs instead of the elevator. Watch new T.V. shows. Don't do the same old things all the time. Cook Buford the Chicken in a southern barbecue when the war's over and try a new barbecue sauce. Put on a fake eye at the next U.N. meeting for me!

Sincerely,

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PERSUASIVE-Middle

These papers make a good start at crafting persuasive arguments, but each needs work. The first relies too heavily on personal feelings; more substantive arguments would strengthen this writer's position. The second piece is stronger--and heavier on substance--but jumps from clogged kidneys to insensitive hunters to clear cutting so rapidly there is no chance to build audience support.

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I think its really unfair that I don't get to talk on the phone as long as other kids. I know that may sound dumb but it doesn't for me. If someone calls me I think I should stay on until he/she has to get off, but if I called I should get off when I have to. Its only proper. the thing that my parents do that not many parents do is that they yell at you or call your name really loud to get you to get off the phone. It just embrasses you, especially if it's the opposite sex your talking to. They just get the wrong idea of your parents being jerks, but really they can be nice people. I've tired to talk with them about it but it just seems like its going over their heads.

Its hard being a teenager and sometimes you just have to rely on the phone because thats the next closes thing to having a friend by your side when you need it.

I can remember one time a while back when I was on the phone with my boyfriend who is my ex now but I was talking with him and my parents started yelling my name to get off the phone. I had to stay on because he was telling me how his weekend was, and he was in the middle of his conversation, so I stayed on hoping he would hurry up. Then my dad started yelling my name louder and louder. Then my boyfriend stopped and said, "Do you have to get off?" I said, "Yes," and started apologizing for everything. I shouldn't have to be the one saying sorry, it should be my parents job. I just wish my parents would clam down about the phone use.

* * * * * *

Green is Good

Vegetarians. Aren't they those health-food-nut, skinny-as-a-rail joggers we all see so much of? No. Vegetarians are just everyday people like you and me, especially me. I have been a vegetarian for almost three months now and I still can't find a reason to go back to eating meat.

Why do people eat these innocent animals if they know the harm that it's doing to their bodies? Studies show that vegetarians have a lower risk of heart disease, diabetes, and some forms of cancer. Besides that, red meat will clog up your kidneys.

I really don't understand hunters. How can they kill anything as precious as a deer, then shoot it, cook it, and eat it? Just hours before it was grazing in the grass, pondering the finer aspects of life and now there it is laying helplessly on your plate.

Deciding to become a vegetarian took me weeks of in-depth research. I had to keep my protein level up somehow. After reading that most of our forests were being cleared away for cattle grazing, I finally made my decision. So eat the greener way and avoid all those guilty feelings.

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PERSUASIVE-Low

These writers seem to have a general sense of what a persuasive argument should be, but the first never focuses on anything specific, and the second talks about **how** to persuade, rather than presenting an argument.

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Advice for A Friend

If there was someone I knew who I would want to feel differently about a situation, I would give them advice to persuade them not to. My advice would be to stay away from it, say no to the persons, ask questions about it, and ask its peers if it is right.

My first piece of advice, "stay away from it", could consist of drugs, a dangerous stunt, or an abandoned place. Either way the stakes are high and it can cripple. It doesn't cut it with me if I tell my friend it is a mistake and they defend

it by saying, "everyone else is doing it," and I say, "you're not everyone else." My first piece of advice is very important because it can hurt the person and the people around them.

Saying no is my second piece of advice. It is important because those two words could get a person out of a lot of trouble. Such as drugs, sex, being picked up in a car by a stranger, or getting out of a crime such as shoplifting, or stealing a car, or also breaking and entering. It is all right to say no because you aren't wimping out on something, you are saving yourself from getting into something bad.

My third piece of advice, ask questions, is really important. Some important questions to ask when you are in a situation are, is it safe, is it legal, will I get into trouble, or will it mentally or physically hurt me. These questions could get a person out of having sex, doing drugs, or vandalism. I would rather have a friend more than anything else who asks these questions.

Finally, ask your peers for advice because they could have advice that could help you too. They could get you out of situations in which they were once in. This isn't as important to me, but it may be to someone else.

If there was someone I knew who I would want to feel differently about a situation, I hope this advice would persuade them not to do it. Remember if someone doesn't use some of this advice, it may get them in serious trouble.

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If I had to persuade, or convience someone into not doing something, I would tell them what could happen to them, and give them examples. I would also show them clipings from magazines and newspapers if it had some thing to do with them. I would also tell them what else they could do, and if I had done it tell them what it was like.

I might even try and bribe them if it was that important. If it was drugs or something as bad, I might even tell his/her parents and or police, after talking to them.

I think it is important that someone should be able to convince or persuade some one because there are alot of times that you need to know how to persuade and convince some one at some time.

* * * * * *

EXPOSITORY-High

Either of these papers could have been chosen to exemplify strong voice; they are highly individual, unquestionably expressive. They also inform--the first indirectly, through humorous anecdotes, the second more directly. While neither provides facts or textbook data, each offers a delightfully insightful look at who the writer is.

* * * * * *

If I had to choose a slogan for my shirt it would probably say, "I don't know," with a big question mark on the back. My shirt would be very useful because "I don't know" answers a lot of questions. Here are 3 examples of uses for my "I don't know" shirt.

I'm sitting in the stuffy, crowded Algebra room and my dumb partner asks me, "What is x+2y-(5x+2-a)?" I could simply point to my shirt.

Another example would be.....I'm veging-out in my bedroom, my shiny black radio is blasting on my favorite radio station, 93.1. My little sister barges in and asks, "What time is dinner?" I point to my shirt.

My best friend, Joni, and I go to a horror movie. It was about half way through and from what I had heard from my brother, the grossest part was yet to come. I slowly reached into the steaming popcorn tub. My hands were

convulsively trembling. The warewolf is thrusting through the forest, viciously tearing at the bushes. It gets closer and closer to the small child.....I felt myself tense-up like rain freezing into ice. It grabs the child and wrenches on his neck. The child tryed to fight back, scratching and screaming. The high-pitched squelly scream rang-out through the theater like a drumset in microphones. The child's bloody head slowly rolls through the bushes and stopped at what looked like the front row seats. "That was sick!" I exclaimed as I turned my stiff neck towards Joni. She uncovered her eyes and said, "I think I'm gonna throw-up!" She quickly turned around, hanging over the edge of her seat and I turned my head the oppisite way. I could hear the gross gagging noises and I almost threw-up. The gagging noises stopped and Joni looked at me and said, "Do you think they have a towol at the concession stand?" I pointed to my shirt.

As you can see, there are many uses for my, "I don't know" shirt. Uses at school, home and in public. I suggest that all of you make yourselves "I don't know" shirts because you can wear it and use it for the rest of your life.

* * * * * *

On my shirt I would put: "I may be quiet but I listen very loud."

As many people know I am a quiet person. Not many people know me very well. Several reasons for this are: I don't need to hear my voice all the time to know I'm alive, I feel and breathe, Thus I know I'm around. Another reason is I don't need to monopolize conversations to get attention, or to interrupt people all the time so I can be the center of attention - I know who I am, what I need and how to get it. I don't need to hurt others to build myself up.

But I do hear well, I hear others cutting "friends" of theirs apart, saying unkind things just to make themselves seem better. I hear people's feeling being hurt by others ignoring them. I hear when noone speaks to me because I choose to be more considerate of others, and not to follow the crowd. I hear tears on faces, because they aren't accepted by some because they don't have the right looks, the right clothes, or they are not cool enough to be popular. I hear the lonliness of people sitting in the folding chairs at a school dance because they are not loud enough to be hear.

I plan on listening to my children like my own parents are listening to me. Suprisingly.....they were the ones that taught me to listen.

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EXPOSITORY-Middle

Even though we do not get "inside" these writers, they do share some general observations that paint an on-the-surface portrait. It is the big picture--but without those interesting little details that really enhance understanding.

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Some are humorous, some are grotesque, some are demeaning, and some are just plane idiotic. T-shirt slogans fit into all of these catagories, yet some are in catagories of there own.

If I had to pick a slogan to wear on a t-shirt, it would simply read:
"Surfing is life, the rest just details."

Even though I don't surf it has become my favorite sport. The main reason I don't surf is because I am stranded here in "T" town where the weather is hideous, and there isn't a decent beach for miles.

The slogan I would enjoy wearing to school would have to read:
"I don't need school, I'm as stuck-up as I'm going to get."

My basis for this statement depends on the fact that in school people are trying to be like one another, and they are being overly concious about what they wear, look like, talk like, and act like. My opinion is "If you can't be yourself you can't be anybody." That would probably make another good T-shirt slogan!

* * * * * *

If I could pick any slogan to wear on my shirt it would be, "Say no to Drugs." Drugs are really bad for peoples health.
It fits me because I am really against drugs. They make people get "high." They make people see things that aren't really there.

If people keep on taking drugs there will be more people in jails. I would wear that shirt because I would want people to know that drugs are bad for there health, and they are killing people, so just say no.
I know that there are people in my school that do drugs. And if they see my shirt they might realize what they are doing to there bodies. If people say no to drugs it will make that persons life better and the peoples around them too. And it will keep them out of jail.

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EXPOSITORY-Low

These writers tell us what T-shirt slogans they would choose, but very little of the "why" behind the choice. The reader is left with many unanswered questions about who these writers are.

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My T-Shirt slogan would say "Skateboarding, What a life to live." I would choose this slogan because skateboarding is one of my favorite hobbies.

I learned skateboarding from one of my old best friends. He taught me tricks and gave me my first skateboard.

I met another friend who has this big half-pipe, a ramp. I go to his house and ride on his ramp and learn new tricks.

Now I just ride in the streets and do tricks.

* * * * * *

Be all that you can be.

I think this slogan Be all that you can be is very good cause it encourage people to work harder so they live better, and be a better person. People don't work hard enough. If they worked harder life could be so much easiery.

If you think about this slogan it makes sense, and it doesn't. Our basketball is in second to last, but we have beat the first place team twice. So we haven't been all that we have been

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11th GRADE STUDENT PAPERS - TRAIT

IDEAS AND CONTENT-High

A clear central idea and carefully selected details mark these papers--all of them strong in Idea development. Notice the imagery in the tongue-in-cheek piece on criminology. In paper two, we are treated to a delightful and very human portrait of a teacher who is memorable for--well, many reasons!

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A SLAVIC TALE

It has been stated that everyone is an expert at one thing or another. When asked to state what their expertise is, many will shy away from the subject claiming they do not know just what it is that they are good at. I, on the other hand, am proud of my advance accomplishments in the area of detecting criminals.

I live in inner-city New York. I dropped out of highschool last semester, and, while making forty thousand dollars a year at my hot dog stand, I work undercover for the New York Police Department. My masculine composure and heavy stubble disguise the fact that I'm only fifteen. I serve hundreds of people each day, but my disciplined eye tells me which customers are friendly, hardworking husbands and housewives, and which are ruthless murderers and selfish thieves.

No one in New York has the raw talent that I possess in my amazing ability to detect criminals. The key to spotting a thief is in the way he walks. Normal people wear trench coats and sweaters with slacks and a briefcase. They walk down the sidewalk with thier head at a 55° angle to the ground. They do not smile, but sneer, unless they have indigestion, in that case their nose is tight, and they have a firm upper lip. They take quick and even strides with their toes facing straight forward. A thief wears a black stocking cap, an unbuttoned flannel shirt, and blue jeans. His head is never still; he looks behind him, in front of him, and beside him, but never into anyone's eyes. He is usually running or in an unsteady jog, and he always has some abstract item worth a sizeable amount of money in his hands. The average person would never suspect a person such as this, but I have studied this sort and know that this man is a thief.

A murderer or hitman is much more difficult to spot than a common thief. They dress like the average man, but when they order a hot dog they lean over, inches from your face and in a sort of grunt-type wisper they say, "Hot dog . . . mustard." They never order ketchup or relish. This used to perplex me, but I've come up with a theory that logically explains this behavior. I say that hitmen only eat after a kill, and before because they would have trouble keeping it down after seeing the sight of their hit. They come get hot dogs straight from the scene so the sight of their kill is fresh in thier mind, and if you've ever seen a dead guy with innards seeping through the hole in his shirt, you'd know that it looks just like a mixture of ketchup and relish; therefore, they don't order either of the two. Many will never notice the last clue that tells me a man is a murderer; that is, when he pulls back his coat to grap his wallet, there is a pump action, double-barrel, sawed-off shotgun hanging from his shoulder.

As you can see, I have skillfully mastered the fine art of spotting true hazards to the community. I am a top gun of the crime stoppers, better than any superhero. I cannot be fooled by any potential evil doer. Let's face it, when it comes to recognizing crime, I am an expert.

* * * * * *

J.J. was the "rebellious" pupil in my sixth grade class. He had extremely long blonde hair that flowed halfway down his back, and everyday he wore the same slashed up levis jacket with the print of Iron Maiden on the back. That is why I easily recognized him as Mr. Lowell sent him gliding dow the hall on his stomach past my feet. But this is only one reason why Mr. Lowell stands out in my memory so much.

Mr. Lowell defined the words witty, humorous, athletic, and shortfused. Nobody attempted to insult him because it was common knowledge that he would retalliate with a put-down capable of making him appear as a hero, while the student would stand speechless and embarrassed. However, if a student misbehaved Mr. Lowell would lose all sense of humor and become strict for the remaining part of the day and sometimes he would get upset and act irrational (as J.J. discovered).

His overpowering appearance intimidated us. He stood about 6'3", had a shiny bald head (which was one thing that all students quickly learned not to mention), and a wicked scar striped across his nose that he claimed was some sort of freak hunting accident.

He was an avid hunter. His students were all blessed with hours of hunting stories (and I emphasizing the word "stories"). These stories included tales of outrunning a deer, killing a coyote with a rock, and my personal favorite, riding on a bear's back.

The good side of Mr. Lowell was that he treated every pupil individually. He had no favorites and none that he looked down on. I recall occasions at recess when Mr. Lowell took it upon himself to be the coach of both teams in the after lunch football game. Later in life I realized that he had done this to ensure plays that involved every member of both teams.

Although Mr. Lowell often behaved in ways that the P.T.A. didn't always approve of, his shortcomings were easily overlooked. Sure there were times when his actions provided means for being fired, but a shared respect by students and staff for Mr. Lowell never permitted it. Surprisingly he was loved by everyone, probably even by J.J.

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IDEAS and CONTENT-Middle

Here are two samples of writing at the developing stage. It is easy to see where the writer is headed, and ideas are taking shape. More specifics, little details, and a touch of the unexpected could make all the difference.

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THE TEACHER WHO NEVER TO FORGET

I was in about in the third grade with this one awesome looking teacher. She stood about 5'8" tall and weighed about 130 lbs. She had very thin golden blond hair with baby blue eyes, and she was very smart.

Whenever I needed help she would help me, She even would make a house call. When ever she came over it seemed like I would fall in love. When ever she came over, I didn't want her to leave. I awlays pretended like I was dumb, because I didn't want her to leave.

I don't ever rember her ever trying or wanting to criticize me in any way. but I do rember her rubbing my back. I rember her favoring me on some candy I won. She made the whole class try to Guess about how many pieces of candy was in this 1 pint jar. The other kids guessed around 150 pieces of candy. I on the other hand guessed 100 and got it right on the dot. When I got home I dumped them all out and started counting them as I put them back in the jar. When I got done I counted about 150 jelly beans. I even counted them twice. I took the jar back to my teacher and told her that I counted 150 jelly beans in this jar, and that someone else deserves this and that I don't. She took the jar out of my hands and sat it on the desk, that we were standing by at that time. Then she walked over to the door, looked out the door, looked both ways, then she shut and locked the door. Then she walked over to me, picked me up and sat me on the desk. She bent down to my level, and told me that she was proud of me. Then she reached over and gave me a big ole slobbery kiss. As soon as she was done, I hopped off the desk, and opened the door, ran straight down the hall, and told all of my friends. Then all of my friends went into my teachers room, and asked if they could be kissed. And that was the teacher that could never be forgotten.

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If I had a chance to do something over that I did it would have to be the time when my grandmother was living with us; I never spent enough time with her. She was very sick and had to live with us because she needed 24 hrs. attention. I was never home. I was always with my friends and going out. I always thought that she would live forever; I never thought that she could die.

When I went in to see her, I would talk to her or bring in her dinner and medicine. When she had dreams that were caused by the medicine, I would go in and see if she was alright. Most of all, I regret all of the times I could've spent with her. I was so scared to hug her or touch her, afraid that if I did those things I would hurt her. I was just 12-13 yrs. old and scared. I never thought that she might have wanted a hug; I just thought of myself. I gave her hugs, but not enough; I should have given her more to lift her spirits up, to let her know that I was there for her and that I never wanted her to leave me.

But all of that changed, my grandma was getting worse and on a Sunday she died. I was right with her when she died and so were a lot of my family members. But the worse thing that I would lile to change is when I had to tell my older sister that my grandma was no longer with us. That is probably the hardest thing that I've ever done in my life. I hope I neve have to deal with that again for as long as I live.

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IDEAS AND CONTENT-Low

These papers reflect minimal development. In the first, the writer suggests a possible story, but never follows up. In the second, the writer explores very broad themes relating to hunting, but this piece has no real focus as yet.

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A couple of days ago I was driving through a strange looking town called Ladora. As I was driving through I looked down at my watch, it was 3 A.M. and all the lights in this small town were off exept a lonely diner, a second story room with a single ceiling fan-light, and my own headlights.
I kept driving, thinking about the person that was sick or perhaps reading a good book. As I drove by; doing seventy miles an hour; I wasn't really thinking, but this poem somehow wandered into my head. I suddenly snapped out of my daze figuring that this poem was for whoever was in that room with the light on.

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Hunting is a fun sport. The experience of being out in the crisp mountain air is exhilirating. Hunting is easy all you need to know is what your hunting. It's also a fun time to get together with friends and Shoot the Breeze. You don't have to kill anything Just because your Hunting. You can be there for the nature and the wildlife. Almost half the fun of hunting is to be out and roam free through the woods. Hunting is a fun experience and I recommend you do it.

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ORGANIZATION-High

Here are two fine examples of skillful organization. "Chez Vous" boasts a masterful lead and conclusion, wonderful sequencing, strong transitions. What control! "Intro to Pest Control" is an irresistibly imaginative piece which makes good use of persuasive form. Notice the narrative lead-in.

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Chez Vous

A full moon and large picture windows allowed me to make my way without risk of a flashlight. I had grown careless after a week of working this neighborhood. I loafed through the bedrooms and casually turned into the kitchen. An immense lunar image reflected off the immaculate floor of what must have been the most elaborate food preparation area I'd seen since my job at a caterer's last year. The mercury on the wall read 71°; however, the room was so antiseptic as to impress upon me a numbing chill. This place had all the modern conveniences, along with all the fashionable antiquities. The industrial size microwave oven confirmed the rather expensive grandfather clock in the family room; it was nearly 3 a.m., the soul's midnight--my noontime. By the arrangement of the cutlery I concluded that the owner of this estate, a Mr. Keiffer, was either a surgeon or a chef. I opted for the latter on account of his eccentric collection of cookware.

As I was reminiscing over rare visits to restaurants that were actually rated with stars as opposed to billions served, I was half startled by the hum of an approaching automobile. My professionalism kept me from panicking; also, I was fairly sure by his phone messages that Mr. Keiffer would be gone for at least another day. Just in case the passer-by was someone who knew him, I retreated towards the living room, backing away from the curtainless windows. I was nearing the carpet when my feet flew wildly out from under me on the frictionless floor. An intense light flooded the room: no shadow escaped its brilliance. There came at the same time a heart-stopping noise! Did I trip an alarm? I thought that the person in that passing car would surely call the police.
I regained my calm after the clock had finished striking three. Silence. I quickly flipped the light switch off that I had fallen into. The car sped by, not seeming to notice my little accident. As I loaded up for the night I assured myself that from now on I would wear soft-heeled shoes.

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I remember one day when my friend Jojo, who goes to a different school, and I were just hanging around at my house when we heard a terrible scream. We ran to check it out and I will never forget the horrid scene our eyes beheld. There was mom standing on a chair surrounded by four perfectly evil-looking mice. Needless to say, I was terrified and I jumped on a chair as well. Jojo, on the other hand, just got a frying pan, walked over, and flattened the little suckers in no time at all. He looked like a pro! I asked him how he did it he said it was all thanks to a class he took at his school, "Intro. to Pest Control." After we cleaned up the mess in the kitchen he gave my parents a basic lesson in rodent elimination. He even explained how to buy the right traps for the job and briefed us on toxic baits! I was impressed.

I began thinking how great it would be to have a pest control class at *my* school, and how much having such a class would not only benefit the students but the community as a whole.

Everyone knows that pests can be harmful and can carry diseases of all kinds. Rodents aren't the only ones either: there are insects like locusts and termites, snakes, and several others. Wouldn't it be an accomplishment to teach kids how to eliminate or control men's many pests and still have fun doing it? In the process of taking this class students would be learning a valuable trade that they may ultimately choose to pursue in life. Even if this isn't the case the student that takes this class will always be prepared with a vermin situation should one arise.

Students would be taught everything from pest controls most basic concept: squishing 'em - to the latest in chemical and biological controls. They'll learn to treat their quarry with respect, yet at the same time the students will learn that vermin are a problem to be dealt with.

All this knowledge will not only enrich the student; it will also serve to benefit the entire community. Through various homework assignments and real-life application of learned skills there will be a reduction in the rodent and pest population in the immediate community.

To close, a class in pest control would not only teach young people a valuable trade and reduce the immediate pest population, it would provide a safe, ideal manner for students to express their repressed anger and madness. A class in pest control would be simply swell, as I hope you will agree.

ORGANIZATION-Middle

These papers show some strengths in Organization--and some problems as well. The first suffers from overly general ideas which fail to give any strong sense of direction to the writing. Thoughts are loosely connected, but the writer rarely goes in the direction we are led to expect. The second piece ventures off on many paths at once, losing its sense of focus.

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Being successful in the business world, or for that matter, in any world, requires good public relations skills. Appropriate public relations is what makes strong ties between major corporations or lasting friendships.

To obtain these beneficial traits, you first need to define exactly what you think they are. Visit successful businesses or research friendships to discover the basis of this process. Once you've decided that, make a list of these skills on a piece of paper and put it in your pocket. That way you'll have it with you incase you forget one. Recite these action words over and over in your head until you know them from top to bottom.

The next step is to admit these skills into your daily life. It may be difficult at first to remember the steps, but having the slip of paper in your pocket will help. So next time you meet someone, whether it be at a football game or a dinner party, concentrate on building lasting relationsips and making a terrific impression of yourself!

* * * * * *

Something that I do well is drive. I've been driving for about three months now, and I'd have to say that I'm a very cautious driver. Unlike some of my friends, my driving record is clean. I've had no accidents or tickets. The reason for this is because of my cautiousness.

I pay attention to everything going on around me. I drive ahead of the car and notice what is happening ahead, to the rear, and sides of me. I obey all traffic and road signs. In case of an emergency I know what to do. When driving I never mess around. I'm always thinking about what I would do if something were to happen.

I know how to operate my vehicle properly. Maintence is regular in order to get maximum gas-mileage. When driving I don't allow any screwing around in the car. That is to say I don't allow anything to distract me. I also drive at a conservative rate at all times.

I am a good driver. I hope to drive for many years to come. For that reason I'll continue to respect and obey all traffic and road rules.

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ORGANIZATION-Low

Readers are in for a challenge trying to follow the writers' train of thoughts in these two pieces. Notice how both writers skip from point to point as if the reader already knew all about it--unfortunately, that assumption does not work.

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One of the times that I had said something and regretted saying it was the time that I asked a girl, one that I really liked, out to a movie. When I asked her, she said no and gave me the reason why she said no.

"What did I say?", you may ask. Well, I said that I liked someone else about a month ago. I said that our date that we went on was so much more fun than the one that I went on with the other girl. (Pam is the girl that got mad) This is the reason that Pam gave of why she said no. I know that it was none of Pams business getting involved at

the time. At the time, I only liked Pam as a friend, and not as a girlfriend. But still, I had to go after Pam and be her little slave for the time being.

"What would I change?", you may ask. Well, if I hadn't even talked to the other girl and kept after Pam, that I would probably be going out with Pam at this very moment. Right now, Pam is still the girl that I don't know what to do with. If I could change anything, it would be the time that I first saw Pam. If I'd never met her, my life would be a whole lot easier to understand at this moment.

* * * * * *

I like to play basketball with my friends. We sometimes go down to the school down by my house and play basketball there. We play basketball with each other just about everyday. Sometimes we just go over to one person's house and play basketball there. If we do that we usually lower the hoop to about eight and half feet so we can have a slam dunk contest. At this time of the year we all just play on the team at our school. We don't all play on the same team through. Some play varsity, junior varsity and even some freshmen. The varsity hasn't won a league game yet but they always play hard. The JV isn't doing much better we have only won about two games in league. The most point I have scored in one game was twenty-three points at home agnaist Estacada. The problem is that we don't want to play as a team and you can't win without team unity. Next year our basketball team is planning to take a trip to Florida. While we are in Florida we will play many differont team from the Florida. But we need to earn about $4500 dollar to accomplish our goal to have enough payment to go to Florida. The coach said "My improvement this year has been tremenous and if I would lose about 20 pounds by next basketball season he thinks I would have no problem make the top 11 player that get to go to Florida. So right now I have started trying to lose that weight. I'm going to go to the Gary Bay basketball camp and play summer league also. So I hope that I do good at basket ball that I do good at baskets.

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VOICE-High

Share these papers aloud and you will hear two very different voices. Shades of Edgar Allan Poe haunt the first, a very controlled piece with Gothic overtones. The second is an irreverent but honest and refreshing look at the art of stretching the truth.

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I sit and write as I wait. I wait for the thing to return, though it is nearly dawn and such things rarely show themselves in the light of day. I shall relate, in this diary, the night's events. I wish I could forget this night of demons and may, by morning, have my wish. But now I write and perhaps the writing will calm my trembling wrist.

It is my habit, on nights when sleep does not come, to sit in my study and read until the fire in the hearth dwindles to glowing embers. As I read this night, the light began to dim and flicker. I turned to find the candles near the window no taller than the brass stems that held them. I went to the fire and unhooked the lantern from the peg to which it is usaily fixed. I lit the lantern and went to the closet for candles.

After fixing the candles into place and lighting them, I noticed that the fire, candles, and lantern combined to form a light so intense that it was as bright as day in the small room. From the window I could see the square of light cast onto the street from my window. The square in the street was nearly identical to the square projected to the floor of my study on the days when the sun is not hidden in overcast. Then, in my fixed stupor as I studied the square of light in the street, I heard a rumbling in the distance. It was as if a great fire was roaring its way up the path that led in front of my house; past the inn, which was the only other light on the road leaving Ladora; and on to Boston.

The hideous rumbling did so frighten me that I dared not more from the spot I stood for fear that all vile things of the night would be there to destroy me. I tried to convince my mind that I heard only thunder. I could not accept

this because the reason for my unrest was the bright moon shining onto my bed and into my face. With the moon out there are no clouds, without clouds there is no thunder. Yet the rumbling persisted, not dying out like thunder but growing in crescendo. It was approaching.

At that moment I saw the light, the hideous glow of it's eyes perverting the night. It grew closer and closer until I could make out the shape. It was squared on the corners and moved at an unnatural pace. As the thing passed in front of my home I could see into it's transparent body and swore that, just for a moment I saw the devil, Lucifer, himself. But as the body flew through the light from my window I saw the figure's head turn, it was the head of a man, an ordinary man, not a demon at all.

Perhaps the unfortunate fellow trapped in the belly of the beast had been on the road and was swallowed, or, and I pray this not be the case, I am the only man living to see Death, Death returning home with a soul in tow. I saw him and Death knows when he has been noticed and recognized. He will return for me, He may not come tonight but he will come and I do not intend to be unconscious when he does.

To the Reader: This is an excerpt from the diary of Gerald Cluse (1706-1741) dated February 3, 1741. He was found in a trance-like state three days later. He was starved and hadn't moved or eaten sice finishing this entry. He died on February seventh without making any communication with anyone. What frightened him out of his sanity is still unknown.

* * * * * *

I'm not good at many things, and by no means could I be called an expert at any of the things I am good at. But I do have one talent. I am a natural born B.S.er. How do I know that? Well, for one thing, a teacher once told me that I "possesed the inate ability to convince people that . . . (I was) . . . in every way, shape, and form correct." Basically, she ment that I could look someone dead in the eye, lie like a dog, and have that person believe every guilded word that passed through my lips.

In some ways, this God-given tallent is something I'm proud of. Its good to know that I have the acting ability it takes to pull off some of the stories I've told. I once had to give a speech on the death penalty. Even though the teacher had given us weeks to prepare for it, I still had no facts or statistics to support my arguement. All I had was a few personal opinions and the knowledge that I could probably squirm my way out of it. When my turn came, I took a deep breath, smiled, and told one of the biggest whoppers ever recorded. I made the death penalty sound like angels singing at Christmas time; pure, devoted, and a sure enough miracle--straight from the hands of God.

Now, some people might wonder, if my conscience doesn't bother me now and again. And, truth be told, it does. I mean, it just doesn't seem right to out and out lie to people who are looking up to you for guidence and support. And there have been times when my conscience got the better of me, and I simply couldn't think of a blarney-blessed thing to say. But you know what I've noticed? Every single time that I tell the truth, and hold my gift in check, I wind up in more trouble than I would have, had I led those people to believe what they wanted to believe in the first place.

My dad once told me that liars go to hell. If he's right, then I really don't have much of a chance. No ammount of pennance could ever make up for all the fabrications that I've made. But I can take some consolence in one thing. My mom says that my dad's just as full of it as I am.

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VOICE-Middle

The writers here seem to have a fair sense of audience, and the voice within their writing is lively and personable. A willingness to open up just a bit more, to reach out to the audience, to "let go," and the voice will come booming through. It is there--just below the surface.

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The Expert Procrastinator

Everybody is an "expert" at something. (Or at least thats what they tell me.) The closest thing that I come to being an expert at is procrastinating.

I believe that it is a common thing for people to procrastinate every once-in-awhile. For instance the dishes you should have put away this morning, but then you decided that they could wait untill tonight. Or, how about the laundry you were going to do last night; but you got caught up in a television show and decided you would do it tonight instead.

I procrastinate to the extream. My motto is "Everything that can wait untill tomarrow should", and "Why do to day what can be done tomarrow or, next week even." One of my favorite things to put off is homework, althouh laundry, dishes, and cleaning my room are also high on my list of things to procrastinate.

There are many excuses that I use to justify to my self and others why I put something off. The excuse I use most often is, "I didn't have enough time." Second in the race comes "I needed the time to rest, I've been very stressed out lately. Another well used example is "Well, I'll still have plenty of time, it shouldn't take very long." Often, the excuse I give my parents for not getting something done today is; "Opps! I forgot, "I'm sorry it just sliped my mind." The use of this one is good because it makes them feel guilty for raising such an air-head.

In reality though, I must say that my expertice in extensive use of procrastination is due to a major lack of motivation; when dealing with thing that don't Intrest me.

* * * * * *

Im an expert at warming up food, but not cooking it. Cooking is very complicated for me, but not warming up food "its great." For me being and expert at warming up food, I went threw some funny experinces.

The first time I tried to cook a grilled cheese sandwhich I burned it. I burned that sandwhich so good that the whole entire house was full of smoke. The house holds smoke alarm went off, and boy was it ringing real loud. My mom & dad and of coaurse my brothers & sisters all got up to see what I had did, they all just laughed at me because I didn't know how to cook a simple grilled cheese sandwhich. I let that little incident go by of them laughing at me for burning my sandwhich, like I really knew the burner was up so high. So then I knew for something that little & simple to burn like it did, I shouldn't have the burner up so high.

Well about a month later when my mother was cooking in the kitchen making dinner for the family, I was to busy studying for a test. She made dinner & set it on the table. I didn't eat because I wasn't hungry. But I remember perfect, I remember the next morning I was hungry like a dog, so I tried to make a delicious breakfast for myself. So I got out pancake mix, some bacon, and some eggs. After making the pancake batter I poured it in a pan to cook. When it was time to turn the pancake over for the other side to cook, I didn't know exactly how to flip it over, but I still tried anyway's. Sure enough my pancake flew everywhere, all over the stove, wall, and floor, but I didn't let it bother me. So I moved on and tired to make my eggs, what do you, I couldn't flip the egg over either. So I let it burn & turn dark brown. And as far as my bacon, I cut off all the fat not knowing your suppost to cook the fat with the bacon. So I didn't have much of a breakfast.

Thats where I took up warming up food, at least that doesn't need to be cooked. Im such an expert at warming up food you wouldn't believe. You simply grab left over food that's still good, and warm it up on medium level or low. Then simply let your food warm up, after warming up food your ready to eat a warm meal. Good tips would be taken advantage of a microwave, which are very helpful in this case. If you dont have one, get one to become a great expert.

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VOICE-Low

You need to listen hard for even a hint of emotion in these two pieces; it is as if the writers deliberately suppress all inner feelings and thoughts. Notice how each event seems as important as every other event; no highs or lows here.

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Oct./1/1990

It is 7:45 AM I was deer hunting I walked in the meadow. I heard something and I looked and it was a deer. It was a four point buck I tride to get closer

it started to move. So I pulled back the hammer and I puled the trigger and I hit it. When I hit it it jumped up and then fell down. I started to walk torwards the deer it jumped up and ran a way Itried to track it down. I wish I was using my 30.06 Iwould of got it then. If allowed the blood trial as far as I could but I could not find it. So I kept on hunting that same day Isaw four deer one of them was the one that I shot that moring so I shot it this time and it ran on privet land and layed down and died so I went on the land to get it but the owner would not let me get it and Isaid it is a law you have to. He took the deer so I went and got a police officer and Itold him the hole story and he went up and told that man to give back my deer. He said but iv gutted it out and I skined it. And the police officer asked him who shot it and he said the kid did. So he gave it back to me. And Iwon the big buck contest that I enterd. They took my picther and put it in the newspaper.

* * * * * *

One night I was at a little diner on the outskirts of a town called Ladora. I was with my girlfriend. I ordered the Spaghetti with meat sauce, and she ordered the fish and chips special. We talked throughout dinner and eventually left about 3:00 A.M. I drove to her house and we talked for about an hour and a half. I left her house at around 4:45 A.M. because I wasn't feeling very well. It was very dark as I was driving home even with my headlights on high beam. When I got home, I parked my car in the garage. I went inside and threw my keyes on the kitchen table. I walked up the stairs and crashed on my bed. A little later I started feeling worse and ended up vomiting in the bathroom. Later on I opened my window to get some fresh air. As I was looking out the window, I noticed a car driving past. When I examined it closer, I noticed that it was only Tom Brown, the farmer that lives down the street.

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WORD CHOICE-High

Note the strong and vivid images that fill these fine samples of writing. The first is lyrical--almost poetic, the second wonderfully precise.

Black as coal, strong as steel, this statue of flesh I beheld was the most amazing memory of a woman that I know to this day. "Ms. Wallace", an afro-american planted in the soil of Seattle's own school-system with title (so mighty) of 3rd grade elementary teacher. So much knowledge bubbling under her tight carpet of curls . . . . spilling out her eyes and mouth in forms of stories and lessons. A memorable sight and sound, she was.

"Ms. Wallace." Her first name remains unknown, but I can imagine it would be thick and exotic. A name difficult to say, but tastey to the teeth. Maribuku, Swanla, or Thanwala. A name to match her skin; sleek, velvet, midnight honey worthy of only the finest violet-died silks.

The knowledge she had to offer glowed golden in her cheeks, yet as a teacher she stood firm and weeded the educational "ideal" into our own thoughts. Free and creatively she brought the class to a state in which we could create our own text, our own oppinions. Then, and only then, would she help us question the different sides of our answers.

If her beauty wasn't enough, or her teaching, it would have to be her voice and smile that plastered such a warm memory of this woman. They soothed me and spoke 'hellos' to me when I needed them most. She told me I was "a talented student with alot to offer the rest of the class and world! Don't be selfish, Sarah. I know in it's there, and I want some, too!"

I'll never forget you, exotic-woman-of-the-Amazon-world-Walker. You still wonder in my dreams all of year-time.

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Spelunking

Spelunking, or cave-exploring, is one of the most enjoyable sports a person can pursue. It is a physically invigorating activity which can lead to fabulous discoveries and a deep love for natural wonders. However, like all sports, spelunking demands several abilities and attitudes to be conducted skillfully. In addition to a healthy measure of curiosity, a caver must have a respect for nature's delicate balances and a firm understanding of safety procedures to pursue his sport without endangering either the cave or himself.

One of the most important prerequisites to becoming a spelunker is the possession of a curious nature. An explorer must have an innate yearning to discover the unknown to drive him steadily through the earth's interior. He must have, as Hillary aptly phrased it, a desire to conquer or reveal a mystery "because it's there." Without this insatiable curiosity, most people will not have the determination to crawl through muddy passages and brave subterranean bodies of water, and to lose one's resolution halfway through the exploration of a cave can be fatal to a spelunker. This curious nature is an essential possession for cave explorers.

However, perhaps the most important possession for the welfare of a spelunker is a working knowledge of cave safety procedures, for a caver must never let his regard for personal safety be overcome by his curiosity. The prudent cave explorer should have at least three different sources of lighting and should also have a small supply of quick-energy food with him. If the use of rope equipment is necessary to conduct the exploration of a cavern, a spelunker should be expertly aware of how to properly utilize it, lest his support collapse as he traverses a steep incline; countless cavers have perished through improper rope management. The most important safety rule for a cave explorer, however, is to never explore alone. Spelunkers should always use the "buddy system," for partners often can rescue people who might die if unaided in a cave. A strict adherence to common cave safety procedures can mean the difference between life and death for a caver.

Finally, a knowledgeable cave explorer must have a healthy respect for nature. Caves have a very delicate balance which allows them to produce the beautiful formations spelunkers adore. Merely touching an active formation stops forever its continual building process, for oils from human skin dramatically upset its delicate balance. Even more so, smoking and littering in caves damage caverns irrepairably for future generations. A respect for nature is essential to the preservation of caves and therefore to the continuation of the sport of spelunking.

The knowledgeable caver can pursue a sport which is physically invigorating and exciting. Lack of prudence in a cavern can be fatal to a spelunker, but with the proper skills and attitudes, he can discover a subterranean world, the wonders of which many others shall never see.

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WORD CHOICE-Middle

The first in this group exemplifies language that works; it is functional. There are some pretty good moments--and a few clichés. The second example shows a writer trying hard to stretch, and sometimes going over the edge.

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THE WIERD DREAM

"What the . . . . Oh Man! just another nightmare." "I can't believe this!" I said to myself. I got up and turned the light on. Zoooom, the same brown car sped by my window. "This is three nights in a row and I keep having the same nightmare!" with the same brown car going by my window everytime I get up and turn my light on. I looked at the clock and again it was exactly 3:00 am. "This is wierd." I told myself. But, I went back to bed thinking nothing of it.

The next night I went to bed feeling very funny and strange. I kept asking myself why I kept having these dreams. I didn't want to go to bed and keep waking up because of it. But I knew sooner or later I would have to go to bed. Soon enough I was fast asleep.

Tonight was different though, I suddenly woke up from my nightmare at 2:45 am. "I don't believe this, what the heck is going on? I asked myself.

I got up from my bed turned on my light and began pacing back and forth in my room. I waited until it was almost 3:00 am and looked out my window. Sure enough I looked out the window and saw a car coming from the distance. "But wait!!" I looked across the road and saw an elderly man from the reflection of my light crossing the road. "OH MY GOSH!!!" I said frantically. "There isn't a moment to lose!"

I quickly opened the window and broke the screen out. I then jumped out the window and ran as fast as I could. I looked down the street and the car was coming fast! I ran onto the pavement and quickly helped the elderly man off the road. As I turned around I saw a brown car speed by. My mouth dropped and my eyes got big as saucers. I just starred with disbelief.

I finally realized the reason for my nightmares. I was to save a man's life. And if I hadn't have turned on my light in my room I would have never seen the man crossing the road!

* * * * * *

Throughout my life, I have been bombarded with new educational teachers each school year, and only one has extremely touched my life of growth. This person has opened new compartments in my soul, and as a result I have grown not only intelligently but also spiritually. Her style is a "one-of-akind." No one can compare to this breeze of a teacher. She blew into my life and left without a trace, yet I still live her. The mentor that has influenced and motivated my life by her characteristics, personality, and style of teaching was my Gifted and Talented English teacher by the name of Diane McMeans.

Her characteristics were so unique and distinguishing that she had an aura about her that could be touched. For example, her face never had too much make-up on, just enough to touch her God given high lights. Her face had features of youth, but through the youthful features showed marks of years of wisdom. Her eyes were like vast oceans of knowledge. A person could dive into her eyes and begin to see so much. Another characteristic that she lived was her body frame. The structure of her anatomy was slinnder, yet she was well-proportioned. Her height was an average height not too tall, and not too short. Over all, her body was as though it was a newly born puppy, fragile, pure, and perfect. In addition, her attire only projected a more beautiful woman. Her clothes were vibrant, but not offensive. They were elegantly casual. In the same fashion, her garments were conservative not flamboyant. In short, her face, anatomy, and clothing brought out the true educational and loving person she really was.

Not only have her characteristics engrossed my naive senses, but so has her keen personality. Her personality consisted predominately of joyous feelings. She was never fully dressed without a smile. Her laugh was the sound of the wind drifting and flowing through a peaceful dove's ivory white feathers. Through her smile and laugh she was constantly enjoying life to its fullest. Because of this uncurable love of life, she wanted to share it with ones she loved so dearly. To sum up, her over all being was that of a loving goddess living in a putrid, racid world of rampant hatred.

Most importantly her style of teaching made me embrase her authenticity. In her, class we had no projects, only well soul searched products. She made us search our hearts, minds, and spirits. She would make us think of others. Then, she would make us think of ourselves. She would then bring them together and make us realize the interdependence of men and how an individual in society would function in a world of reality and illusion. In short, she made us grow!

Consequently, my G.T. English teacher was my most stimulating professor ever present in my exsistence. Her characteristics, personality, and style of teaching alluminated a glow about her that was virtually impossible to dim. Through these traits, developed an impeccable teacher, and from this teacher, a rejuvenated student immerged from an obtuse educational system.

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WORD CHOICE-Low

These writers seem to be struggling for the words that would help them express ideas clearly.

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I like playing Basketball it's a fun and active sport. Basketball is a sport that takes alot of cordnation. you have to have alot of passions but you have to also have alot of prassure on the Ball.

DeFense is the most inportant part of Basketball you have to have quick Feet and hands. You have to have quick Feet and hands so you get a reaching in Feal or Blocking Feel but you don't let the other team score.

OFFense is also inportant you score on oFFense but oFFense is when you have to be passient and not rush thing what till you get a good shout That's how I play Basketball.

* * * * * *

Back in the olden day's, when I was a little kid, I went to elementary school at Riley Heights. The school was only about 2 block away from my house. I had a favorite teacher name Mr. Ford. He was my favorite teacher for many reason. He kind to other, he dress really nice. He love what he teacher, that Math.

Mr. Ford is a 4 grade teacher. He Love all the student, that he teach. Mr. Ford was my favorite teacher because he teachesr Math. I Love Math it is My favorite subject. Mr. Ford Love to tell us Jokes, that is sometime funny, but most of the time it is stupid. When ever Mr. Ford gets mad at a student, he throws some kind of object at the wall or at his desk.

Mr. Ford doesn't really follow any of the school rule, that why like him too. He Let us eat in class, and would let us talk in class, as soon as we are done with our work. Mr. Ford Let me correct all his paper, and sometime the test.

Mr. Ford is my favorite teacher because he care for all student and tell the student all he know about math. Mr. Ford is the best Math teacher I ever had. Whe Mr. Ford talk everbody listen. Everybody in my class wanted to learn more from him. Mr. Ford care, help, and love what he teachs that why he is my favorite teacher.

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SENTENCE FLUENCY-High

Following are two very fluent pieces. Read them aloud to hear the fine sense of rhythm and varied sentence beginnings. These writers have an ear for language.

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I reflect back on today's activities and desperately try to restrain the tears. Why did it have to happen? I could have just as easily taken fifth street this afternoon. The incident will not escape my mind and it shall never depart my soul. Shake it loose, Candy. If only I could extinguish these feelings of guilt and anxiety, but I keep seeing eyes. Those penetrating eyes which are so accusing. My uncontrollable mind keeps wandering back to that horrible place...

My alarm sceams at me to wake up. Is it six o'clock already? Washing my face and brushing my teeth seem like unbearable tasks this morning. I dress quickly, throwing on whatever my mother washed last night. "You're food is getting cold", my mother calls. I settle down for some type of nourishment I can hardly call food. Grabbing my lunch, I head out the door into the fresh morning air.

I drive considerably slow this morning. John usually doesn't arrive until eight and I don't feel like conversing with my friends. I linger in the hallway until the last minute, hoping to catch a glimpse of John. Never mind John now, I'm late! Reaching biology class just as the bell rings is my own personal science which I've perfected. The day drags on. John didn't come to school today.

My mind is on anything but driving home. Does John even know I exist? Did I fail that history exam? Will mom let me take the car out friday nig . . . CRASH!!! My car skids to the right. What did I learn in driver's e?" Turn your car towards a skid? Oh heck, I'll just brake! My car screeches to a halt and I jump out to see what I have hit. There's a small trickle of blood on my left tire.

Why had I decided to take the residential route home? Fifth street was much quicker, but John lives down this way. My heart is pounding so loudly that I'm sure it's the reason people are peeking out their windows. A small boy, about the age of seven, comes running towards me. He looks at the bloody mess behind my car and starts to bawl. The child gazes into my eyes and I completely fall apart. Those piercing eyes invade every inch of my heart and cause my soul to shrivel up into the fetile position it has been longing to attain since birth. I feel like an unwanted, helpless child.

A stout man, with enough hair to cover Big Foot, examines the heap which used to be a little boy's center of the universe. Demolition Destruction. Annihilation. Mrs. King had been teaching us those unbelievable words earlier today. That now feels like centuries ago. How was I to know I could accomplish such devastation? The grief-stricken boy finally departs, leaving a large portion of his life beside my car. The man who had been examining my pile of destruction, carries it away. It is now far beyond this world of pain and suffering. I drive away, concentrating on the little boy and his beloved puppy.

* * * * * *

Mr. Stanley was, in some ways, a typical science teacher. The most obvious reason that springs to mind is his white, sometimes coffee-stained labcoat which often carried a musty odor. His glasses, perched on the tip of his nose, were roughly the same thickness of Tammy Faye Bakker's layered makeup, which led to the general consensus that his physical abilities weren't quite up to par. This lack of respect for my science teacher's athletic prowess was fueled by the fact that only standing on tip-toe did he, by the wildest stretch of the imagination, reach 5'10". He also possessed a bald spot that a Hare Krishna would envy. The brown beard and mustache he wore was, most probably, an attempt to compensate. His small stature and goofy-yet-amiable attitude led his students to dub him Papa Smurf.

Despite achieving a small measure of notoriety as "Man most likely to have chalk-stained shirt," in large part what made Mr. Stanley memorable was his inability to deal effectively with the trouble I caused. There was no real punishment system in Mr. Suchanek's class, so I got away with nearly everything, receiving only a veiled threat. "Well . . . I might have to give you a one page essay." was Mr. Suchanek's pet phrase, but much like a politician's campaign promise, it was quickly forgotten. Because of his unwillingness to enforce his threats, it was difficult for him to stop me from pulling stunts like knotting a Smurf's neck in a hangman's noose and attaching it to the wall of the room. Smurfs were drawn all over the room, burned on the Bunsen burners, and had their heads neatly cleft

from their tiny blue shoulders and put in his desk. If Mr. Stanley knew the perpetrator of all these, he would most likely threaten one with a one page essay and proceed to explain ionic bonding.

The one time Mr. Stanley actually (gasp) punished a student was, of course, yours truly. After I had left a note on the door falsely informing my class that they were supposed to go to the library, I promptly stepped inside our room and observed the bulk of them heading to the library from the window. As Mr. Stanley stepped inside his classroom that day, he observed three groups of now-returned students. The red-faced, the laughing, and the innocent looking. As Papa Smurf asked the inevitable question "Who did this?" both of the former groups stared at the latter group, which consisted of one person. I was then forced, horror of horrors, to sit outside and do my homework. I didn't, of course. The cafeteria was, after all, nearby and open for business. Mr. Stanley didn't ask how I happened to come by a doughnut while sitting out in the hall. If he had, I would have shrugged, taken a bite out of my jelly-filled, and proceeded to my desk while he went on to explain the wonders of DNA.

In retrospect, I probably shouldn't have given Mr. Stanley so much trouble. But I wouldn't take any of the time I spent or the things I did back for the world. Maybe that's why I feel the teacher and the class are so membmorable. Maybe.

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SENTENCE FLUENCY-Middle

In this paper the sentences are grammatically sound, but there is a real sameness to length and structure. Read it aloud to hear the mix of fluent and awkward rhythms. Shifts in tense add to the reader's difficulty.

* * * * * *

I feel that the course, Full-body Underwater Basketweaving I and II should be taught at University High School. This exciting new class is perfect for University.

Full-body underwater basketweaving should be taught because it will increase the fitness level of the students. It is well known that America's students are not physically fit. This class will increase lung capacity. With the pollution in todays society, lung capacity is very important. Underwater basketweaving even builds muscle. Staying underwater for an extended period of time takes a lot of muscle.

Another reason this class should be taught is because it is a craft. Students should learn crafts because crafts are a part of America's history. Before T.V.s and walkmans, some people would do crafts for entertainment. This tradition needs to be kept alive. The only way to do that is through teaching crafts to students. Most students find crafts to be boring, full-body underwater basketweaving is interesting. Students will be learning a craft and enjoying themselves at the same time. Basketweaving, along with other crafts, also builds eye-hand coordination. In todays society, with computers and advanced electronics, eye-hand coordination is increasingly important.

As that full-body underwater basketweaving is not common, this increases the value of the class at University. Having a class that is unusual, adds flavor within the students day. It will also help the students later on. Many colleges look for students with unusual and interesting skills. Underwater basketweaving fits into that category. The class will also help the student that doesn't quite fit in. It will give that student an identity. The class will also give University an identity. Being that it is uncommon, people will hear about it and about University. University will be thought of as an innovative school. A school willing to take risks for it's students. I believe that this is a fine reputation to have.

Although this class appears to be expensive, it is quite affordable. The only additional costs would be the cost of some large portable tubs. These tubs are quite inexpensive. An art teacher could easily teach this class. Therefore, an extra teacher would not have to be hired for the class.

As you can see, full-body underwater basketweaving is an unparalleled class for University. I believe that the program should begin as soon as possible.

As I am awoken by my alarm clock at 3 AM I get up to get a glass of milk. My bedroom light was on in my second-story room, right then I remembered that I fell asleep reading. As I looked out my kitchen window I see a car with its headlights dimmed. I wondered why they must be up at this hour; maybe they were going to or coming from work.

George parked his car and he was about to get out to use the pay phone on the corner of seventieth at this time he looked up into the building that surrounded him, he saw a light on; he also saw a silouette staring down at him from the window Ladora, Wyoming seemed quiet at this time--George wondered why tonight everyone was asleep but George and myself. He put his hand in the air waving at me, I opened my window and told him hello, and offered him to come up into my apartment he accepted; on his way up George fell down two of the top stairs, he wasn't really hurt except for his bruised knee. As he reached my doorstep I opened my door I invited him inside. He told me that he stopped to use the phone to call his work where he was on his way to when we saw each other. I showed him where my phone was and he was welcome to use it. He called. All of a sudden out of knowwhere I hear a whistle. My teapot waters is ready. I offered George a cup of tea but he couldn't stay; he was running late as it is. He put a peice of paper with his name and number on it on my table with a quarter. "The quarters for the call and the papers' for you"--"Give me a call sometime"--"Maybe" I replied.

Soon after George had left I begin to fall asleep in my chair so I go back to my bed. As I drift off I wonder who George is and why he waved at me. Maybe he was a lonely man--maybe he was just a lost person.

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SENTENCE FLUENCY-Low

These writers struggle for the phrasing and word patterns that would make one sentence flow effortlessly into the next. Awkward phrasing and mixed constructions trouble both pieces.

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Sometimes in our lives we make bad choices which cange our lives in ways which effect us negatively for some period of time. One of my mistakes which I regret the most is moving back in with my parents. This is because once I had learned to be partly independent on myself and learned some of the responsibilities that one must have on themselves to live without any real authority its hard to be forced to move back in with someone when you feel like your putting your life in reverse. There were many things I did which led to the lead up of moving back with my parents but there was also very many good reasons I had for not wanting to move back in.

Quitting my job was probably the biggest mistake I made during this time because it was the one thing that gave me stability at which a court would look at as a good reason for me not to have to move back in with my parents. Another mistake I made was starting volleyball at school and enrolling but then never going to school and quit volleyball once I knew I had to move back in. So in other words when I found out that I had to move back in I basically gave up and didn't put up a good enough fight, when you know what you want in life and it is benefitting I feel that you should go after it. This is because your the one who pays the price for the rest of your life for what choices you make.

A couple of good reasons moving back in with my parents changed my life so much is because I had to move out of town and also switched schools. I started my new school late which set me behind in my classes. Once I was in the new school I had no will to keep my grades up because my whole life goal and plan which I had for so long was now changed. My dream being broken left me with alot of poor attitudes and really I didn't have a desire to do much of anything. The problem with moving out of town was that my other friends who had become so close to and who had played the role as my parents for so long I was now not able to see anymore. My friends in school who it

seemed I had knew for quite some time were now so far away and out of touch. Leaving town was like moving into a whole new world. Those are a few of the things which happened because of my choices.

The results of this decision will effect my life greatly but the emotional feelings which came about from this is more of a heartache than one would expect. It is very painful to the heart when you're tore out of a household of people who are like your family which you are very close to. And to then be put into live with your real parents which had little to do with you for two years it tends to be very hard. You can't pick up the pieces and put your life back together and then have somebody come and tear your dreams up and then put you somewhere else.

* * * * * *

I like to do many Things. But i'm basically good at one thing, RC model building. Building remote control cars is something you have to learn by your imagination and your ability to work. It takes time to become good at it. You have to have good materials in order to make a good car.

The materials needed for This project are plexiglass, mixed color of paint, screws & bolts and lots of other Things but first you want to add up The money That you have. It is going to be expensive. I have built 3 of them myself and not one was under $150.00. But There worth it once you get it put together and know The basic shape.

When you get your supplies & materials your going to need tools. A drill and Hot glue for your plexi-glass. You need a coping saw and a sautering iron for a bunch of reasons. One good reason is for engine wires Then you need it for shrink tubing. Once you have finished that then you can get all the electronics for the car. Thats the expesive part. You should get a good kind of reciever but not so expensive that you can't afford it. If you like watching remote control cars Then you should build one now that I have taught you how to make Them. Good luck.

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CONVENTIONS-High

Expectations for eleventh graders are high, but papers need not be flawless to receive high scores in Conventions. These writers show great adeptness in using conventions to enhance readability. They paragraph effectively, handle dialogue well, spell and punctuate with skill. Each piece reflects thoughtful editing and proofing.

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The sun had just began to rise on that brish morning in early September when I heard the dreadful sound of the school bell, as the students began to file into the school like cattle during the autumn drive.

The snow had come early that year in Bigfork, Montana, making the monotonous journey to a new school all the more depressing. This was the third time that I had changed schools in the past year, and I could feel a slight chill run through my body as I entered the classroom full of strangers. This was, by now, a common practice for me, but I still felt as though this was again, the first time. As I looked up to greet the silent stare of the class, I felt a warm hand on my shoulder as a deep, manly voice spoke out those awful words: "Well class, are we going to welcome our new student?". That hand was attached to the muscular arm, which was extended from the robust body of Mr. Wilson, the one teacher who I will never forget.

The first day in my new school seemed to drag on for an eternity as I began to make new friends and settle into a normal routine. Mr. Wilson was a favorite of many students, with his bald spot, pot belly, and sheepish grin. He was a teacher whose philosophy was that the only way to learn was to have fun. He had a way of making a dull subject reach out and seize me by my sense of imagination.

In a small town school, such as this one was, the curriculum is not as strict, and subjects that would normally be taught only in High School, were often taught at lower levels. Because also in a small town, every body knows

everybody, there were many outlets for Mr. Wilson to obtain materials for class projects that would never be authorized in a city district, because of budgets. At one time, when we were studying anatomy and biology, he had a friend salvage the viscera of deer. He used this to help us learn more about how our internal organs work. This was a sloppy, but exciting experience.

One of Mr. Wilson's greatest aspirations, which I am glad he didn't acheive, was to be the first teacher to enter space. He fascinated me with the world of engineering, aerodynamics, and astronautics. For several weeks we dallied about with a game known as "Space Quest" in which we had to design our own spacecraft, spacestation, and a relatively realistic mission. During this role playing adventure, he would often talk of how he wanted to be chosen as the first teacher to leave our protective atmosphere. Listening to his discussions of space travel intrigued me to a great extent. At this time, I began to realize what I would become in life.

Since that time I have begun to strive all the harder to become an Aeronautics Engineer, and that childhood dream, sparked by a one-of-a-kind teacher, is becoming a reality. I'm so glad that he wasn't chosen for that fateful shuttle flight of 1986. If he had, there would be a great number of students, missing a fantastic learning opportunity. Mr. Wilson was the greatest teacher that I ever had.

* * * * * *

Together in the Rain

I cannot get to sleep; my thoughts are too restless. Staring out of my bedroom window, all I can see is a single pool of light on the otherwise dark street below. The light comes from a streetlamp on the corner. Illuminated by the lamp is a steady shower of rain. With the window cracked slightly open, I can hear the rain all around, pelting bushes, trees, and the roof over my head. The scent of the cool freshness of night rain calms me, but I feel as though my mind and body will never relax enough to allow rest.

Every conversation we have ever had is replaying itself in my head. I think about times we have spent together and I can remember trivial details that I didn't even realize noticing at the time. If I listen hard enough, I can imagine your voice speaking to me. I wonder where you are and what you're doing. It seems impossible to me that you may not be thinking of me at this precise moment, as I am thinking so intensely of you.

A car drives slowly by my house. Its headlights momentarily blind me. After I regain sight, I look at the clock. 2:31 AM. I wonder where the car is going at 2:31 AM. I wonder if the car will contine as far as your neighborhood, passing your window, blinding you as it blinded me, while you stare out into the darkness, wondering if the car has driven in and out of my life, just as I am wondering if it will drive in and out of yours.
I dismiss the car and turn again toward the window. The rain taunts me with the fact that part of it is falling on your house; part of it is standing at your windowsill, a place that I would like to be. The rain must be teasing you in the same way.

Lightening flashes. The downpour outside gleams for a second, with electricity behind it. You have to have seen that. You have to know that I saw it too. Where are you? Why don't you understand what the rain is trying to do? It's trying to bring you closer to me and you're resisting it. Why?

The rain lessens slightly. I push the window as far open as it will go. A few drops of rain splash my face.

Another car is approaching! It must be blocks away, but it's coming this direction. It slows, preparing to turn the corner. Its lights flash into my room. This time I shield my eyes. I lean out the window, knowing that the driver will stop and come over to my window. Who but you would be driving towards my house at this time? I check the clock. 2:56 AM. It must be you. I can hardly contain myself because I know that in a few seconds, we will be together in the rain.

The car accelerates, faster and faster after it turns the corner. By the time the car passes my house, it is going at such a speed that I doubt the driver notices my outline at the window. The car never stops; I watch it disappear into the rain.

I slam the window shut and snap the blinds down, shutting the night out. I curse the rain and the street light, blaming my frustration on them.

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CONVENTIONS-Middle

As you read through these samples, look for the strengths in Conventions, as well as the problems. You will see that despite errors in spelling, punctuation, paragraphing, etc., these writers are doing many things well and their work reflects at least light editing.

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What a Teacher!

When eight grade came around I was not too excited. Actually I was finally to the point that I hated school with a passion. I had the feeling that no one cared what happened to me. All my teachers disliked me because I was the class clown, and didn't do my homework like all the other nice children. But one teacher had faith in me. She took control of me when I started her class. I did not like this at all. She would stand over me till my work was done, correct it then have me do the incorrect one's again. This got old real quick. Then my teacher decides to check with my other teachers on how I'm doing. Wow was she mad. She thought the help she was giving me was helping me with school in general. Boy was she wrong. I was flunking all my other classes. That's when she decided to do something I couldn't believe. She held a confrence with my parents all my other teachers and the principal. From what I heard of the meeting it was to discuss my future at that school. The school was ready to give up, and so were my parents. But this is when my teacher stood up and said to give her two more weeks and she would have me "buckled down" and "at the books"

Boy I was not a happy camper when I found out what she had in mind. She made up a two week schedule for me with homework written on it. Man was that thing packed. I hadn't done a single assignment the whole semester. So I had a lot of catching up to do, and I was not looking forward to it. But the way my teacher had her plan was to keep me after school for an hour and a half. It turned but that she made it seem like play and not work. We would often munch on chips and pop while doing homework. Withen a week I had gotten caught up with my late work. Now I had to learn to start the pace to keep up with the other students in my classes. I found it a real challenge, but by this time my helpfull teacher taught me to thrive on challenges. So thats what I did I tried to beat everyone done as soon as possible. I went from the lowest percentage in the class to the second highest in the class. My overall success is shown on my report card which went from a .06 grade point Average to a 3.67 G.P.A. Now that was an improvement from no one to a someone. I got the most improved student award that year and it was all because of one caring teacher I knew, Mrs. Millie.

Thank you Mrs. Millie. I will never forget you.

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Throughout my life there are many things that I've said or done that I would like to do over, or erase from the record.

Everyone has minor things that happen to them that they would like to change. For example, if you tell someone a lie and they find out about it you usually wish it had never happened. This is a very common example of a small thing. Unfortuneatly there are big problems that happen that can or can't be helped. In the last year I've done alot of things that I couldn't help and believe me I desperately wanted to try again.

It all started on a beautiful summer day. My parents had left on an out of town trip and were planning to be gone for atleast three days. The night before I had invited a friend over to stay the weekend. When I found out that he could come up and I thougt to myself, "Wow!" this is going to be a spectacular weekend. Even though I had planned a great weeked it so happens that it wasn't going to happen this way. Infact it wasn't even going to come close to what I had planned.

Originally my friend, Mike, and I had planned to drive up into the Mountains and go rock climbing, and we also decided that we would go swimming afterwards. Our drive required us to drive up in the mountains about thirty miles. The place where we were going was called Pyramid Rock.

Once we arrived at Pyramid Rock we climbed for about an hour and a half before we decided to go to the river. It was about 90°s out and Mike and I were very tired and were looking forward to the swim We started driving to the river and we had gone about ten miles. My problem started when I came around a corner and hit loose gravel which caused me to loose control and the truck went off a twenty foot embankment. This was not good! Thankfully neither of us were hurt. It turns out that we had to walk 10 miles, and those were a long 10, before we found someone who could pull us out. This and the rest of the happenings that constituted the day were very precarious. All this is forever in history but if I had the chance to change these happenings I would certainly go back and redo that day.

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CONVENTIONS-Low

It can be hard to focus on the message when the writer struggles with very limited control over conventions. Multiple errors in these samples distract the reader and impair readability. Each sample would require extensive editing prior to publication.

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here I Lay in my bed.

With the light on Tears Fallen From my eyes. I Reach For paper and a pen to Wright him. it's 3:00. A.M. I see the phone and wonder should I call. or would he just hang up. then I hear a car Fly by my Windo. I jump up to see if it's him, hoping he came to say sorry and that he Forgives me. I see the car pass I look away with a tear Falling From my eyes! I Lay back on my Bed. thanking maby it was him and he saw the light on so he just passed by. Maby that's why he went so Fast. next I knew I had Fallen asleep on my Bed.

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One day I was riding in the pick-up with my mother. I said something that got her very, very, mad at me. It was if she had ever seen a live "Big foot" in her life time. she respond by saying, 'no that was the stupid's thing I had ever heared you say" she also said that there was not a such thing.

I said; yes mom, there is one in the area (but just joking around.) Just before we left the house again we were watching the movie "Harry and Henderson" The movie was mostly about a family of four taking a trip through the woods when suddently out of no were a large hairy creature jumps in front of them. What would you do if a large hairy, thing came out in front of you while driving? Mom said, Don't scare me like that because I hit a cat yesturday on the road. then she said Don't laugh it might happen to you someday when you are driving alone. Then suddenly mom said; "Angela you better get your permit so you can drive yourself around. I said ok mom lets go get it right now? But mom was in a bad mood already and said "no"! Because you haven't done your work for day like I asked you to do. I said, but mom. she said no but buts do it now. I said yes, mom I'll do it now but if I can go to the game on Tuesday night.

She said only, only if you got all the work done that I asked you to do. I said, "OK mom, I sure will." So Tuesday final came around and I had some work still not done. I said mom can I go tonight to the game.

She said only if your room is clean. I said OK I will clean it and so I start to clean and mom comes in and said what are you doing? I was putting everything under my bed so I can go. Then mom said, Stop get everything out and put it were it belongs. and so I did with a hour before the game to start and the time to leave.

Finally my neighbors calls and asking if I can babysit in a hour. Then I asked if I could. I decide to stay home and make money instead of spending it at the game so I went to babysit and had fun.

11th GRADE STUDENT PAPERS - MODES

DESCRIPTIVE-High

One teacher in this illustrious group gives her students Jolly Ranchers and continues teaching right through the fire drills; one strikes terror into the hearts of the unprepared with her withering looks; and the third heals shattered feelings with a hug. Specific, well-chosen details bring these memorable characters to life for us.

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Miss Rodriquez, a short, bubbly woman with red hair, bounced into Spanish class on the first day of school. She laughed and smiled, and spoke to the class in Spanish, although no one really understood what she was saying. However, she assured the students that by the end of the year, they would be able to understand. Then she opened the door to a closet in her room and gave everyone a jolly rancher.

Miss Rodriquez' goal for every student in her classes was to have each individual learn as much Spanish as possible. She wanted her students to know not only the grammar, but also the culture, and the idiosyncrasies of the Spanish people. However, she wanted people to have fun while learning. She seized every opportunity to make every lesson new and exciting. Each day after class, the students walked out wanting to learn more Spanish. She wasn't afraid to do anything. Many of her lessons seemed silly and ridiculous, but they helped people to learn better. She would sing or dance in front of the class, and create chants to emphasize a point. Not until after class did the realization come that something had been learned from her crazy endeavors. One time the fire alarm sounded, and, as usual, the student body had to gather outside. She was in the middle of teaching a difficult lesson on a grammatical structure, and she didn't want the class to forget what she had been talking about. When the whole class was out of the building, she gathered everyone together and continued the lesson. The rest of the school gave the class some rather strange looks, but she kept right on teaching.

In addition to her academic side, Miss Rodriquez cared about everyone as a person. She wanted people to learn about life, how to succeed, accomplish goals, and realize dreams. If someone ever needed help with school or with life in general, she was there to listen. Her room was always open during lunch and after school. People could go down to her room to talk or to have a great time. She boosted everyone's self-confidence, and made people realize that they could achieve what they set out to achieve. To all her first-year classes, she showed the movie of Don Quixote de La Mancha. The movie was a story of an old man who put his dream of making the world better into reality. No matter what the rest of the world said, he pursued his dream. After the movie was over, she lovingly told the class that they could, and should, also have dreams. She reminded the students that they could be like Don Quixote and not to let anyone spoil their dreams. To a young seventh-grader just entering the start of the "real" world, those were encouraging and motivating words. Also, she challenged her students to achieve greater heights. Many times she told them that they were doing the same work as high school and college students, and that they could do better. She encouraged all of her students to learn verb tenses and vocabulary beyond what the course designated.

Miss Rodriquez was dedicated not only to her Spanish students, but to the rest of the school as well. She was in charge of the Spanish Club, and she put in a lot of time and effort to organize meetings and parties. Although she was the director, she let the members decide on almost everything. She extended the membership to include students not enrolled in a Spanish class. Spanish club gatherings were fun times when friends could talk and meet new people. She enjoyed providing a place for teenagers to relax and be removed from the pressures of life.

Miss Rodriquez was a memorable teacher. She put a tremendous amount of love and care into her teaching. While in her class, people were considered to be human beings, not just another student shuffling through yet another class. Whenever she was needed, she was always there ready to listen and help. Learning, in her class, was not only interesting, but also exciting. She was considerate, concerned, and lively. Many memories were created and lessons learned in her classes that will not be forgotten by her students.

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My junior American Literature teacher is a short but impending lady who has a classic yet nineties look about her. Anyone can tell by looking at her that she is not intimidated by any person and probably never has been. She has a short bobbed blondish-brown hairstyle and very small eyes that are beady but never shifty, they are surrounded with tiny wrinkles, that aren't from smiling but from squinting and glaring at her students who are being rude, undignified or childish; as her forehead also becomes wrinkled, the students get the idea real fast! The discussions she can provoke, with her stunning sarcasm and clever wit, can be and usually are quite heated. As she also antagonizes students to talk and express their feelings, she has an uncanny ability of making us actually enjoy the literature we study.

I will never forget the first day of American Literature . . . as the class starts to settle down and people are talking about new schedules, summer plans, ex-boyfriends, ex-girlfriends and life in general she walked in and got the reaction Michael Jordan would get if he walked in to a gym full of fifth grade boys. The entire room silenced as she looked at each individual student to turn around, be quiet and listen. The students not facing her, felt those squinting eyes, piercing their bodies and turned around in complete silence. When I raised my head I though she was going to burn a hole in my face, the way she was looking at me. She began speaking with a very sarcastic tone in her voice about the rules of her class and the various material that we will be covering; without meeting anyone of the student's eyes and not smiling once. She asked a few students about their summers with such a coldness that I thought it was deep into winter already. As the week progressed, Friday came, and of my period only seven people had switched out to another teacher and everytime someone did she would announce it to the class! For about a week, I thought she might have been the evil twin of Mother Theresa, but soon she'd begin to tease, cohearse and mentally provoke my classmates and I to become more aggressive in the classroom discussions.

I respect her more than any teacher I know because of her ingenious ways of making her classes study: by either scaring them into it or just arousing their curiousity and adding a spark to an otherwise boring subject. I must admit she has a way of sounding quite pompous sometimes, but most of the time her point is well-intentioned and understood. I will remember her forever because of her "stay out of my way" attitude and love her for the way she awakened my interest for literature.

* * * * * *

Miss Burton was the neatest teacher in the whole wide world. She was very short and always looked as if she was excited about some secret she was hiding. Her hair was about shoulder length and very bleached, but at the time, I had accounted the unique color of her hair to her special personality. The were a few times I was close enough to smell her hair. The scent is still strong in my mind today; it smelled of fruit-sweet fruit. If it wasn't for her warm, smiling eyes, a little second-grader might be mislead by her pointy witch's nose and her matching cackle of a laugh that would go off at even the slightest hint of humor. Every time she did laugh, she would throw her arms up and her head back in the biggest motion possible, making you feel as if you were the funniest kid on Earth. She was very good at that - making you feel like you were the funniest person in the world, or the smartest person, or the most beautiful person. Miss Burton made you feel very special. So you can see why I devoted my entire second-grade career in an attempt to impress Miss Burton.

My efforts towards impressing her made it very difficult to be forward about the present discomfort I was feeling one afternoon. I had misjudged my time out a recess and continued playing freeze tag instead of breaking for the restroom. So there I sat, forty minutes later fidgeting miserably while Miss Burton read to us from "Ramona Quiniby." I decided that I needed to take action. Very uneasy about my decision to interrupt her reading and ask permission to be excused, I raised a very timid, sweaty hand, "Miss Burton, can I go to the bathroom?" Looking up from her book, she replied, "Can it wait?" This was the neatest teacher in the whole world asking little ol' me if it could wait. Of course it could wait! "Yes," I said.

Well, apparently, not only had I misjudged my time out at recess, I had also misjudged my bladder capacity. Without permission, my bladder relieved itself of this agonizing discomfort all over the floor.

"Mizz Burton! Sarah peed all ova' da flowa!" screamed little Phillip who sat next to me in his strong Mississippi accent. After the horror passed, the tears came - big ones, but Miss Burton was right there. Taking my hand in

hers, she very gently, lead me down the hall & into the bathroom, where she took me in her arms, enveloping me in the best hug of my entire life. I'll never forget that hug.

That hug, however will not be the only thing that year will be remembered for. For I was given much much more. Miss Burton gave me love - a love that would always be there, even years later, to remind me of my individual worth. I thank Miss Burton wherever she is; I'll never forget her.

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DESCRIPTIVE-Middle

Sprinkled among the generalities are the juicy details readers savor. These writers are beginning to make their characters real for us.

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Teachers? Nah. Don't think about 'em much; and after the school years over I like to think about 'em less. But, there is, however, one teacher that sticks in my mind - Mrs. Burke.

This five foot, ninety pound, pepper-haired, Spanish wonder was my seventh and eighth grade Spanish teacher. Wow, what a class. This little old lady could have our classed whipped into a veritable whirlwind of Spanish words. It was incredible to sit back and listen to.

She was (and still is) an energetic teacher, packing her lessons full of exercises that would actually make us remember this strange and wonderful language.

But of all the things I remember most, it was the way she could communicate with us. She understood us. Before class she made sure that everyone was in good spirits and felt comfortable. Don't get me wrong, other teachers did that too, but Mrs. Burke took it to new heights. Ok, for example . . . . if someone was having a bad day, we'd all discuss it; sure, we were nosy, but at least the person felt better.

Through Mrs. Burke's lessons I learned not only how fun Spanish could be, but I also learned compassion and a deep respect for the people around me.

Forget her? HA! Never!

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Most students do not consider teachers as friends. Teachers are seen as educators, however, there are still a few teachers left in the world who are not just teachers, but friends. Mr. Marty Zimmerman is my junior english teacher, and my friend. Mr. Zimmerman is supportive to the students, and also relates to the students, an is enthusiastic about teaching. He has cute kids too!

Whenever a student might have a problem, whether it be small or large, about homework, or even a personal problem, Mr. Zimmerman is there to help. For example; a good friend and neighbor of mine (who's name will not be revealed) was just a teensy-weensy bit upset. Okay, I'll be honest. She was bawling her head off. Anyway, Mr. Zimmerman quietly consoled my neighbor and asked her if she needed to talk to someone; such as a counselor or friend. This is just one example of Mr. Zimmerman's kindness for students. All of his students may not have problems, but they know Mr. Zimmerman will always be there to help.

Another charming quality of Mr. Zimmerman's is his ability to relate to students. Sometimes, Mr. Zimmerman will put himself in a student's shoes to relate to their opinion and views, often comparing those opinions to his

adventures when he was younger. Mr. Zimmerman also is always willing to hear new music that students bring him. During class we sometimes listen to the "Eagles", "The Cure," and "Pink Floyd," all favorite groups of Mr. Zimmerman.

Our english teacher educates us about romantisism, classicism, and many other styles of writing. Mr. Zimmerman is so enthusiastic about the literary history, that we write about five million essays a week, so it seems. I think his favorite words are essay, essay, essay! That is alright, essays never hurt anyone. Writers cramp only lasts for a while!

I believe that if there were more teachers like Mr. Zimmerman, students would be much more academic. Through Mr. Zimmerman's understanding, students accomplish much more. Through Mr. Zimmerman's relations to students, both student and teacher learn about each other. Also, because of his enthusiasm for teaching, more students learn about english, instead of the latest clothing trend. With more teachers like Mr. M.Z. the educational system would be revolutionized with happy, smart and supported students everywhere!

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-THE YOUNGER YEARS-

It was during the year of 1994.

I was only in the fourth grade. We had a teacher named Mr. Fisher. He stood about 6"6" and when you are only in the fourth grade everyone is a giant to you. Expecially when someone is that tall to begin with. Mr. Fisher had bright orange hair with a long and trimmed mustach.

I will never forget him. Mr. Fisher was not only a great teacher but an excellent friend to all of us, Mr. Fisher always came across to us as one of the kids. I guess that is why everyone could relate so well to him. He was always into playing the drums and just having fun. Mr. Fisher's favorite cartoon hero was Superman.

It was one afternoon we had just all came in from recess. Mr. Fisher hoped to make a real funny interence. Well it kind of did not turn out that way. As he came running; and leapng into the room playing Superman he hit the upper part of his forehead on the top of the door frame. Mr. foster quickly fell to the ground. A couple classmates ran up to the office to get help. One of the teachers rushed him to a nearby hospital. The next day Mr. Fisher was back with 11 stiches. The remarkable thing is even with his stiches and horrible headache he still did not fail to be his cheery self. No matter what it took; if someone was feeling depressed. Mr. Fisher would not give up untill he raised their spirits. Mr. Fisher brought so much Joy and happiness to us; we will never forget him.

No one is quite sure where is is now. His son Rio is probably around the age of eleven now. One thing I am sure of is. He is brigting Someones day right now as you read this.

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DESCRIPTIVE-Low

It is hard to get more than the most general sense of who these teachers are and what they are like. These writers have not yet given us the details needed to create either strong mental images or a real feeling for how it was to be there.

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That is correct every body does have a teacher that they will never forget.

The teacher, that I am going to discribe is a very specil teacher this teacher has been working with me every since my freashman year, and every since then I have admired her to the T. Della Waller has inspierd me since my

freshman year, When any body first meets someone they always get there stereo type well I had mine, This teacher was all most to clear on class infomation. I could tell right off the batt that this was going to be a wonderfull four years of high school. Della had a heart of gold, A mind of a genuis. My stereo type was like a bohemeing type of hippy of cource thats good other wise I wouln'nt be writting about her. A student that comes into this class will not, I say will not leave here if della thinks he or she is not clear on her teachings. Della and I have had are little falling outs, every body has there difernces and no body is perfct. Della picked her way to succses and it is more than a job it is her life, and it's my job to play that special roll in her life,.... A student..
The teacher I can't forget about is a teacher named Mr. Stubbs. Mr. Stubbs is a teacher that has not grown up. He was a welding and meltles shop teacher? He would like to miss around in the shop. Like take very hot pices of meltle and sticking them in your coverals.

What we would do to get back is to flip up his wilding sheld when he wes welding. Sometimes we would ask him to look at a weld we had just don while it was still hot and hand it to him.

But he had a scrious side to him. When there was work to be done he made us get it done on time There was a teacher that didn't like Mr. Stubbs. That teacher would tell him that he wes mot dowing his job and he would come in and see if he was doing his job. When it wus mot his job to do that.

But Mr. Stubbs was a good teacher. He tought us what we meeded to mow about.

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NARRATIVE-High

In these well-crafted stories, the writer sets up the tale, keeps us hooked with just the right amount of foreshadowing, brings events to a definite climax, and wraps it all up with a conclusion that provides a sense of closure (and in this case, some sadness, too). Notice the strong voice and skillful organization these writers bring to their narratives.

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There are many things that I would do over in life, if I was given the chance. I would like to have studied more for my last math test. I wish I had not decided to climb the tree with the dead limbs, and I wish I had written more "thank you" notes. I wish I could erase all of these things, yet they do not even begin to compare to how much I wish I could erase the croquet incident.

The croquet incident began on a warm, sunny day, just before evening fell. The air was beginning to cool, and the long grass felt clean and soft beneath our bare feet. Around our yard were the usual summer toys; an inflatable swimming pool, beach balls, baseballs, a sagging badmiton net in the front yard, and an even saggier volleyball net in the back yard. All of these treasures however, paled in comparison to the croquet set. It was beautiful, symmetrically arranged, with the brightly colored stripes decorating the mallets and the end pegs. The balls were the same bright colors, and were laid neatly at the feet of the mallets. My little sister and I practically worshipped the croquet set. The thin steel arches, and the way that playing, made us feel very genteel, even if we were looking our scruffiest, both contributed to our love of the game.

My little sister, Suzanne, and I got along pretty well. She is two years younger than me, and I had reached the age where it was just beginning to matter. During the summer, the age difference seemed negligible, and we happily puttered around playing barbies, planting carrots, losing baseballs, and running through the sprinkler. Towards the end of the summer, our relationship would begin to deteriorate, and we would quibble more and more.

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That evening Suzanne and I decided to play croquet. We carefully stuck the steel hoops into the ground. Then we hammered the end pegs into the lawn, creating yet another hole for my father to complain about. Finally we chose

which ball we wanted to use. Suzanne always chose blue, and I always chose red. That evening, I decided to use the green ball, and Suzanne followed suit by choosing the orange ball. The game went pretty well . . . for a while. Then inevitably, we got into an argument. In my mature efforts to convince Suzanne that I was right, I lined my mallet up to her ankle, and informed her that unless I was declared right, I would swing. Suzanne made two decisions. The first was that, she would be right at any cost, and the second was that I did not have the nerve to swing. Her first decision was lost in her yelping, as I proved her second decision wrong. With an almost evil calmness, I pulled back, and then swung. Had her ankle not been attached, it would have been a perfect shot. Her retaliation included screaming, crying, and throwing mallets at my head. My mother spanked both of us, and took Suzanne to the doctor to be examined. Suzanne did not speak to me for a month.

There are two reasons that I wish this had never happened. That incident ended our long friendship. That incident also ended our long summers together. After that, there were of course, still summers, but they were filled with camps, and phone calls, and going to the beach, and being bored. Now Suzanne and I are not friends, we are sisters, and we tolerate each other. Summer is as busy, or busier, than the school year. I wish I could erase the croquet incident, and have my friend and my long summer days back.

* * * * * *

I was walking toward my classroom, alone once again, just me and my lunch sack. Mr. Souer's fourth grade class-room was seperated from the rest. We lived as a tight knit colony, surviving in a hostile fifth grade wilderness. As I bobbed past Mrs. Jannes's classroom, I could hear the babble of my fourth grade companions. I was overcome with cuiosity. Just how did the others live? I stopped, cautiously looked around, and shyly peeped through the curtained window.

There sat Marianne and Carla, whispering and giggling, as best friends should. A mournful lump rose in my throat as I tried to duck and run away. But it was too late, they had seen me. Marianne caught my eyes with a look of remorseful sympathy, but flippantly turned away an instant later to recomence her girlish chatter. Unfortunately her plans were cut short. The now stoney Carla had no desire to join in. My heart sank with a heaving feeling of lonliness as I turned away from her cold glare and upturned nose.

I would not have even imagined this possible a year before. The three of us had been inseperable. Teachers dreaded the thought of us all together. Once assembled nothing could pry us apart or reach our bubbling minds. Wherever they went, I went. Wherever I went, they went. How many times had I looked back and wished I could change things?

Carla's younger brother was not what most people would term normal. One shadey schoolday evening, as we pondered life beside her Barbie pool, Carla confided in me something that she'd never entrusted to another person's care, a secret about her brother. I don't even remember exactly what now. All I know is that it was a trusting confidence, an unspoken vow between friends, and an expression of devotion.

I'm the fool who threw it all away. Vividly I could play back in my mind the early October morning by the tether pole. I could still hear Marianne's childish voice as it richochaed through the playground, "What's wrong with Carla's brother, why's he so strange?" It had been an innocent question, completely without malice and definately not meant to be sinister or probing. A feeling that I'd never felt came over me. I had an unexplainable urge. I wanted her to know what I did. If I'd known what I was doing, I never would have let myself continue, but I didn't. I allowed my weaker side to take over, just for an instant, but that was long enough.

Days later I received an enraged phone call from Carla. "How dare you! You had no right! Don't even bother...not until you've learned what friendship means!" For the first time I actually felt a fiery hatred for my closest comrad. I once again let my emotions fly. Later I realized what I had done, and I can still remember forming the words in my head, that this indeed was the worst day of my life.

My solitude began. I no longer had any real friends, nothing like the splendid bliss I had known. I'd always had Carla and Marianne, ever since that fateful day four years before. I'd never known school without them. Now it wasn't just that they were in a different part of the school, but they were living as if in an untouchable world.

In my grief and embarrasment I receeded into myself. I excelled as a student. My teachers enjoyed their witty, bouncing pupil, but that didn't matter as I sit, a solitary figure on the swing set. The rest squeeled as the merri-go-round whirled faster and faster, flinging their cares behind them in the classroom, until at last they were forced to trudge unwillingly back to their confinement. But the playground was my prison.

On and on it stretched, until finally, after a summer of desolate aloneness, I decided to swallow my pride. On the first day of fifth grade I meekly placed a note in Marianne's palm. "Please give this to Carla," I managed to quietly plead. A look of startled shock flashed through her confused features.

"Jeannie don't you know?, Carla moved away this summer."

My quiet plea had been too late. Never would the girl who had been my closest friend ever know that I had realized my great mistake and begged forgiveness.

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The sun was shining high in the dark blue sky as a stampede of students exit the school after a bell sounds, reacting much of the same ways Pavlov's dogs might. I enter into my parents' car and bellow out a blunt 'Hello'. The rolled-down tinted windows engulfed the van with a confortable warmth from the summer day, showing my first year at high school would soon end.

Instead of taking our usual route taken to our home, we headed downtown to the local computer store. My mother, in an effort to strike up a conversation, began talking about the neighbors' son, who was two years younger than I, and will be now known simply as 'Nick'.

Now Nick isn't the kind of person you hate to have around, but having Nick around in excessive amounts of time would become a large annoyance. Although sometimes I may have acted over-judgemental towards him, my opinions of him weren't confined to me.

Always ready for the challenge of thinking up a new insult for Nick (a skill finely tuned to perfection since I first acquired it), being especially convenient at this time because he would not be able to defend himself. Nick often found himself to be the 'butt' of most everyone's jokes. Nick's appearance was probably the reason we all found it so easy to poke fun at him.

Nick was considerably shorter than most kids, which wouldn't be that much of a problem except the fact that he was also slightly overweight. Another quality of his we would enjoy capitalizing on was his bright orange hair. He would endure the 'carrot-top' jokes to the point of crying himself to sleep (supposedly) and begging his parents to let him dye it black.

We had come about 15 or 16 blocks within the store as I cracked off another couple jokes. It had been going on like that for the better part of 10 minutes. On occasion I would look over and see my mother laughing, like she knew something I didn't, but I didn't pay much attention to her behavior.

Arriving in the store's parking lot, the worst thing that could have happened was happening. My mother blurted out a signal, then Nick, who had been hiding in the back of our minivan, emerged to unvail my humiliation. I thought that my heart would stop, and for a moment I wished it had. He eventually forgave me, but I know he wasn't doing it out of sincerity, and he had every right not to be.

Nick and I don't see much of each other anymore - I find this to be my fault. I guess now I will understand the old saying in kindergarten--"If you don't have anything nice to say, don't say anything at all".

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NARRATIVE-Middle

The first sample provides a good, straightforward accounting of what happened. More attention to motivation--a behind-the-scenes look at what was going on in the writer's head--would give depth and substance to a potentially good story. The second sample is already quite strong and does a fine job of building tension at the critical moment. The lead could use some work, and a better sense of give-and-take between the two friends during the salad bar scene would enrich and clarify a funny story. The ending is a zinger, though!

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The thing that I would have liked to change so that it would have turned out better would be my thumb. On February 9th. of this year the Green River Cougars were hosting the Rawlins Outlaws in an important league basketball game. This game was important for two reasons. The first reason was because it was our Winter Homecoming Game. After the game we would have a chance at going to the district playoffs. But, if we would have lost, then we would be out of the race for a spot in the playoffs.

Due to a dumb reason I was forced to sit on the bench the first quarter. As I was sitting there, our team started to build a nice sized lead over our opponent. So I was sitting, cheering on the team as we did everything right. Well the second quarter came so I checked into the game for the first time. We had about a six to eight point lead when I entered. As the game progressed we had a nice 12 point lead. With about a minute and three seconds left in the second quarter I went into the point to rebound the basketball that was shot. As I jumped up, a kid from the other team was coming down and my thumb hit him under the arm, and before I knew it I had dislocated my right thumb. I was forced to leave the game and go to the hospital. I felt pretty comfortable leaving since we had a big lead. Well when I got out of the hospital, I found out we had lost by five points. It made me upset knowing we weren't going to district playoffs.

I believe that if I would have stayed out and blocked the kid out who shot the ball, instead of going to rebound, this accident would not have happened. I feel that if I could change it I probably would have made a difference in the game and we would be going to the playoffs for the first time in seven years!

* * * * * *

Embarrassment is a normal part of life. Even though we might not appreciate it, they do make the best stories. The thought of taken what you have done or said and change it into something else. My case could be funny or humiliating, but it is still a story. People just have to remember that after the mistake had been done we can always make it funny.

The day was a warm school afternoon. My bestfriend and I went to a resturant for the All-You-Can-Eat Sundae Bar. We had just had three glasses of water and we really had to go to the bathroom before we put our money down for the ice-cream. Her and I knew we would explode if we didn't make this trip.

Soon we were on our way to the restroom. I was walking in front of my friend while we made our way down the crowded Salad-Bar area. Then all the sudden she decided to trip me, and did. I was not expecting it, but I didn't fall. Red blood shot through every vein of my face, and that's when I swore revenge.

As I was washing my hands, waiting for my friend to finish her deed, a plan hatched. There was a type of wall between the sinks and the stalls, a perfect hiding place. I would jump out and scare her. I felt I had to do this for me, and for the rest of humanity that has been faced with humility.

My body pressed against the flowered wall as I listened to her open the door. Her footsteps grew louder as she came closer to her fate. The chance was mine an I took it. I jumped and screamed at the top of my lungs, "Boo!"

To my suprise I hadn't checked to see if there was anyone else in the bathroom. Apparently, the lady that I about gave a heart attach didn't expect someone hiding behind the wall either. My friend casually came out of the bathroom, laughing at my humiliation. The lady was very willing to accept my apology and went off to eat our sundae. To the dismay of my friend I had forgot my wallet. Revenge was small, but it was mine.

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NARRATIVE-Low

These stories have yet to develop a strong storyline. The first is more a list of general impressions than a focused tale. It never goes below the surface to show what really happened. The second is a kind of outline sketch of a story that has yet to be fleshed out. In both cases, the reader must make many inferences--and the conclusions are much too tidy, with no real sense of resolution or change.

* * * * * *

If I could erase something and do it over I would go back through my Freshmen year.

My Freshmen year was a total nightmare. It was about two days before school started again. I was trying to think of lot's of reasons to miss school the first day, but it didn't work on my mom. Monday morning came and I was so scared, I walked down to the bus stop with my sister, then I waited for the bus. My nightmare began right then, there was so many big Juniors, and Seniors around me, then I started shaking. When we got on the bus I stopped shaking, but as soon as the bus got at the high school and we got inside I started shaking again. I was scared, but I wasn't sure why. The good thing about this is because my sister was a senior, so that stopped most of the big kids picking on me. The end of the day came and I was so glad, I went home and I told my parents I wanted to go back. I said, "sure there was a couple of big kids picking on me, but it was fun.

My nightmare was still in my head, but as the year went on it got better. The only thing I wished I was bigger then I bet I wouldn't even have got scared my Freshmen year.

* * * * * *

I told my friend today that I didn't like her anymore, when I really didn't mean what I had said to her but I couldn't get myself to stand up and tell what I mean't even when she started to cry.

If I could go back and change what I said, I would tell her I was just joking and that she is my best-friend. I will never make a joke like I did again in the future. Then everything between us would be just fine in both of our lives.

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IMAGINATIVE-High

These writers stretch the bounds of imagination to create three very different scenarios that draw the reader in. Notice the intriguing twist in the first piece, the controlled voice in the second, the strong and precise word choice in the third.

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a cold wind swept through the roomand awok me. It sent a freeze up my back and it felt like an icecold witches hand gently running her warted fingers through my hair. I gave myself a quick shake and decided to look around, Something was wrong and my natural instincts told me to find out what it was . . . , it shouldn't be that cold.

I went through the house searching, I wasn't sure what I was searching for, but I knew that whin I found it I would know. the floor was freezing with small amounts of frost forming on the carpet hairs, and it crunched when I

walked. As I wandered through the kitchen I noticed that everything was silent. Everything except for the friendly "click, click, click" that I was used to. there was some food out, and I was hungry, so I took a few bites. It was cold and hard as usual. As I crunched away watching particles of food fall to the floor I heard a loud humming sound. In an instant I froze, and raised my head to concentrate on the noise. It was coming from above me. Like a flash I darted up the stairs and came face to face with a left-on television. His expression was colorful and all he had to say was "hummmm". He sat there starring at me the way an admiring murder witness would look on to a next day police investigation as if it were an act of some sort and he was just sitting back munching popcorn. He knew what happened, but he wasn't going to tell me. It was dramatic irony at its best and he loved it.

About that time my consentration was broke with the loud rumble of a crudely built US engine intended to sound intimidating at the line in the savy lightning speed as I came up. I bolted down the stairs to the living room only to find the front door wide open and all the outside air rushing in to escape the cold. looking out into the dark scenery, I noticed the little ones laying in the yard. Slowly I approached the statue-like samaritons. Gently licking the face of a little one, I realized he was dead. Was it my fault? the Big ones counted on me to guard the little ones, Didn't they? I didn't do my job. I let them down. I decided to run away. I had to. I had to leave before the big ones returned and called me a "bad dog"! Terrified, I darted through the grass. My paws slipping from lack of traction as the grass pulled my Feet out from under me. Hitting the street the betraying "clickity, clickity, clickity" sound I knew so well kept, laughing, telling me I would never escape. Working myself I drove harder and harder not looking back and thats when it happened. A blinding light approached my right side. As I turned to meet it, it greeted me with a loud "screech"! then smashed my side and sent my body bouncing to the ground.

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Sonja slowly mounted the stairs and switched on the light. "Only fifteen more minutes;" she thought, "then he'll be here for good."

They had been so happy together until the war began. Hitler and his godforsaken nation were barbarians. She would kill them all if Janusz did not return safely. Jews were just like other people; why should they be treated indecently. The stories she'd heard about the camps were spine-chilling: Auschwitz, Birkenau, Maidanek and all the rest. Janusz had written one letter to her which had arrived five and a half months after the date in the heading.

Sonja peered out the window and saw a pair of headlights approaching the house. "Already 3 o'clock in the morning! My Janusz will be here any time now." The telegram had said that he would be driven home by car from the station in Melinke. The train had arrived an hour ago.

"Only one more hour until I'm home to stay!" thought Janusz as he lay in the back seat of the car watching the needle on the gas gauge rise. After the tank was filled, the driver returned to the front seat. As rode on in the darkness, Janusz could see faint outlines of landmarks, familiar so long ago; it seemed like ages since he had seen Sonja and the little farm. Ever since the day four when ago when the Gestapo had come to deport him he had heard no news of either Sonja or the farm. He was tremendously thankful that she was a Gentile and therefore had not had to experience the excruciating sufferings of Auschwitz--where people killed for a crust of bread, rats gnawed on the yellow corpses, and one could hear the screams of victims trapped inside the gas chambers. Thank God it was just a dream.

The chauffeur sat in silence for the whole of the trip. He was indifferent to this man, a Jew, whom he had been ordered to deliver home. After rounding a bend in the road, a light was visible on a hill. It was the Mieszkawe home where Sonja eagerly awaited her husband. "I wonder what that crazy person is doing up at this hour?" he thought. The car slowed down to a stop at the house and Janusz got out. "Thank you for the ride," he said. The chauffeur turned the car around and headed back toward Melinke, the headlights piercing the dull darkness. Upstairs, the light in the house shone brightly.

* * * * * *

3 A.M.

The light was on, but it neednt' be. He no longer had trouble seeing in the dark; it could be pitch black, and seem like daylight to him. Still, Ernest wasn't quite used to his new sight "ability", as they had called it, and the bald light bulb, suspended from the ceiling, with its slight humming, was a comfort.

His withered legs dangled lifelessly from the wheelchair which he now sat in next to the wide open window. At one in the morning, Ernest heard no one on the streets of this small town. His second story bedroom afforded a commanding view of the neighborhood, but not one that he'd ever see again. He remembered, the park which was across the street, and thought of all the times his mother had taken him there on warm summer days long gone.

He hadn't really wanted to hurt his mother, let alone kill her. It's just that she had kept on at him so, nagging him all afternoon, trying to get him to move on with his life, but he had contended that there was nowhere for it to go. She knew he had a temper which ignited easily. Why had she talked so much? Why didn't she just shut up?!

But she didn't understand. She didn't know what it was like to lose all that he had lost, and he had lost alot. There was the college track team, the college football team, with a shot at the pros, the swimming team, a girl friend, and now his sanity. He had also lost his popularity, and was he ever popular. There was nothing he could do wrong. Everything was going his way--untill that icy winter night after the New Years Eve party. He had been drinking too much, and it had showed. The car had slid uncontrollably into that huge tree. He had lain there unconcious for most of the night before a passer-by saw the car wrapped around the tree. The entire time his girlfriend had sat right there next to him, dead.

Ernest's face and body had been left mutilated, and the doctors said that plastic surgery wouldn't even help him. He was paralyzed from the waste down, and left blinded forever. But forever was almost over.

At 2:59 A.M., Ernest closed the window and the curtain, and pulled the trigger.

At three o'clock in the morning, Ernest no longer had anything to worry about.

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IMAGINATIVE-Middle

Lots of promise here, but the writer's vision is not yet clear enough in each case to lift the writing out of the ordinary and predictable. A stronger sense of purpose would help. Intriguing beginnings get our attention--"Mother Sue," whose visits cause headaches, a vividly described attic hideaway, a child crying in the night. But we need more follow-through: What are these writers trying to tell us?

* * * * * *

I was three weeks overdue and from the first moment I found out, I knew it would be a boy. Everyday, if I could, Mom would take me shopping. The last two weeks we haven't bothered. Mom was too worried Junior would pop out in the store or even the elevator.

That evening I was in bed with a headache by seven-thirty. My husband came up about an hour later with two asprin and a willing hand to rub my stomach until I fell asleep.

Sleeping while pregnant is not an easy chore. Mom did come to tea and managed to stay until dinner, that explains the headache, and of course the other pains all came from little Junior

I don't know what time I fell asleep, all I could remember was the rythym of my husbands hand gently rubbing my belly. I wish he were here now, I thought. I had been watching the clock for the last hour and a half. Junior sure was kicking, tonight!, can't he long now, I thought and hoped!

A few minutes later I flipped on the light, my husband grumbled "is it time yet?" No, I said and tucked him back in with a kiss. I picked up my favorite meditations book from the dresser and began to read. After finishing the third chapter, I heard a horribly loud engine, probably caused from a muffler tied on with a coat hanger. It wasn't just the engine that was loud, it was the gravel flying out from under the tires, in a rage. Obviously the gas pedal was floored because they must have been going seventy miles an hour. Probably just an old bum drunk who just realized what time it was.

We should have speed signs posted, but living in a miniscile town like this the nearest speed sign is thirty miles away in the city.

I read a couple more chapters then became drowsy. Slowly I fell back asleep, with the thought of Junior craddled in my arms.

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The walls are a faded robins-egg blue. Cracks line the walls like the web of a demented spider. The only lamp in the room is plain, possibly even unattractive, whit sailboats dotting its jar shaped side. The only furnishings in the aging attic room are an old oak desk, on which rests an orange tom, and a creaking wooden chair, in which I rest with my book. The room is sparse, which is the way I prefer it. Even the open window through which a cool breeze flows has no shade or curtain. I come here to read at night so as not to be disturbed. No sun in my eyes, no television, no yelling children, nothing but peace. My only universe is the room in which I sit. I find this makes my book more enjoyable. No noise invades from the outside, even the road is deserted, as is usual. I enjoy my book for a while, but my eyes soon grow tired. I decide to rest from my book for a while so I place it page down next to the cat who stirs and stretches. I sit and contemplate the darkness outside my window. A humming sound penetrates the boundaries of my awareness. It grows increasingly and steadily louder. At the peak of its volume a flash of light appears at the base of my window, apparently on the road, and the roar from the road dies away. For several seconds I do not realize what has occurred. Then, as if a switch was turned in my mind, I realize a car has passed. I wonder what the driver is doing at 3 a.m. in the morning. Then I ponder more and wonder what his thoughts were at the moment he passed. Then I wonder if he thinks the same for me.

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I was sitting in my room watching television, just flipping through the channels. I decided since there wasn't anything interesting to watch I might as well read. So I pulled out my book which I had just started the other night and began reading it. It was a scary book to read, but just as I was getting to the good part the baby screamed and started to cry.

So I got up to check on her and the lights went out. I got the baby and went into the kitchen to try and get her bottle. I flicked the switch to turn on the lights, but the lights didn't come on still. I went to check the fuse box to see if any of the fuses were burnt out, but they were o.k. So I went to get the flash light and as I turned it on, the phone rang.

I said "Hello" and it was dead silence. I said "Hello is anybody there?" But no body answered. All of a sudden the person on the other line said, "I know who you are and I can see you now."

Then I immediately hung the phone up and called the police. They picked up the phone and I said "I just got a phone call from a man who said that he knows who I am and that he can see me now," and they said, "Check around your house to see if all of your doors and windows are locked and shut all of your curtains and go some place where nobody would be able to see you. I will send someone out to check on you, o.k.?"

I said "o.k. Thank you," and I hung up the phone. I checked around the house and locked and shut everything and sat in the bathroom where there weren't any windows. Then I heard a cop car and I just sat there with my baby until I heard a knock at the door and someone saying that they were the police. I got up and went to the door and looked throug the window to see if it was the police. It was so I opened the door and they said they had found someone and that they were going to take him down to the station for questioning.

IMAGINATIVE-Low

These papers received low scores in Imaginative Mode--for different reasons. The first provides a very literal explanation that creates no real sense of adventure for writer or reader. The second, by contrast, is wholly implausible, and that is just the trouble. Strong imaginative writing is always grounded, however thinly, in reality. We want to be able to say, Well . . . what if that did happen?

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Last night at about three in the morning a car drove by our apartment complex. The car must have been in a hury to get somewhere because it must have been doing at least seventy when it passed by. I was up late that night because I had invited some friends over to watch movies, we got a late start watching them. because we were out all day playing pool, eating, going to movies, just having fun. When we finally made it to my place it was getting late. We decided to stay up anyway and watch them. around three just before the car drove by we were getting tired and some of us started to leave. That's why I remember the car. at the time I was at the window watching people get into their cars and leave. Most of them had already left when he drove by the apartment. a few of the people who stayed ran to the window when they heard the car to see if they knew who it was but by the time they got there the car was gone. It left us woundering where was he going and why was he in such a hurry to get there

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It was black and stormy outside you could hear the rain hit the roof like clashing boulders. The thunder sounded like ocean waves tearing into high rocks. The lightning made the surroundings like the forth of July. All this could not compare to the excitement inside the house.

It was getting close to 3 a.m. and my eyelids were not even tired. Everyone was there including George Bush, Ronald Reagan, Vanna White and last, but not least Jean Claude Van Damm. The New Year's party was going great. We all played cards, pictionary and monopoly. Everyone was laughing and having a great time. After a couple of more games the visitors started to leave before the weather got any worse. As I sit and enjoy myself I think of what a beautiful and great country we live in.

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PERSUASIVE-High

In these strong persuasive examples, the writers make their positions clear, then use examples and anecdotes to create a convincing case. Notice that even if you disagree with the writer, you can say in each case, "You presented your argument well."

* * * * * *

To: Chairperson of New Course Committee

It was recently brought to my attention that you are accepting ideas for new courses. This is of interest to me because it is important for students to have a part in choosing the curriculum, so that there is a greater chance they will be interested in the classes that are offered. In selecting a class to write about, I was observant during school and at extra curricular activities, looking for something that could benefit the student body. From what I observed just walking down the hall, I thought I had found it. After last nights basketball game I am sure of what it is. We desperately need a course on etiquette. If you were to walk down the halls of our high school, what you would see might shock you. Couples enthralled in Public Displays of Affection (PDA's) blocking hallway traffic, students fighting and swearing, vandalizing the school by knocking out ceiling tiles and writing on the walls, and students littering and spitting on the floor. These should not be the actions of people getting ready to move out on their own and become world leaders of tomorrow. Students today have no respect for teachers or each other. Providing stricter rules is not the answer. Students will just rebel and put up another barrier between the administration and themselves.

In contrast, providing an etiquette course would be an uplifting way to deal with this problem. During Christmas vacation, I had the chance to meet someone from an all boys Catholic School. He doesn't go to the school because he's Catholic, he's not, but because students are well behaved and respect each other. This comes from being taught etiquette in their classes, not from strict rules as you might think. An etiquette class for some, could be more than just another elective. To graduate from a modeling school, you must first complete an image improvement course. Many people I know aspire to be models, but most can't afford the classes. If etiquette class was taught by a licensed image improvement instructor, students would be eligible to recieve diplomas at the end of the course equivelant to those from a modeling school. This could get some of those students started, and give career ideas to those who are not sure what they'd like to do. In addition, the class would be fun, so it would attract more than aspiring models. The curriculum could include many aspects of etiquette and manners, from which fork to use at dinner, to how to write a thank-you card. Both are things that most kids my age should know, but don't.

It would be so nice to arrive at school tomorrow and see students treating each other well, the school clean and orderly, not having to watch couples and their PDA's, and not listening to people cuss each other out, or step in spit or a twinkie wrapper. Don't you agree? I really appreciate your request for ideas, and I hope a class in etiquette is one you'll seriously consider.

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Throughout the years, I have noticed one unnecessary, but recurring problem. It is a problem which alienates an entire section of society. It is a problem that could be easily cured if a few people just showed a little interest and consideration. This problem is the fact that most deaf and mute people are unable to carry on a simple conversation with the people around them. Deaf people cannot so much as communicate with their neighbors and fellow citizens, which is something most of us take for granted. This is not a fault of the hearing impaired. The problem lies with people who are ignorant of a form of communication known as sign language. It is a form of communication that is so vital to a good percentage of the world's population, yet only a few can use in sufficiently. I propose that sign language be offered as a course in the curriculum of this state's high school. It would be a popular, useful and much needed addition.

Deaf and mute people are the forgotten part of society. It is impossible to communicate with these people without training. Since so few people are trained in sign language, hearing impaired people miss out on a great deal. In an emergency, when the only available information is being spoken, how are hearing impaired people supposed to know what to do? If more people who have been trained in sign language were available, then someone could go on television and tell them what to do in the emergency.

A simple outting such as going to the grocery store can be almost impossible because they cannot communicate with people when they need help. If the grocery checker at the store had taken sign language during school, then the whole trip would be much more pleasant for the hearing impaired person. Its all a matter of having enough consideration for those less fortunate to try to do something to help.

There is one more very important reason to learn sign language. Suppose a member of your family loses his or her hearing. How can one communicate? Sign language is the only answer. If I was to lose my hearing, I would definitely want to know sign language. The sooner sign language is learned, the more useful it will become.

Those are just a few of the many reasons why people should know, understand and use sign language. Society should not continue to alienate such an important group of people. Everyone should know sign language and the best place to learn it is in high school.

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Corrine takes the keys out of her mom's purse. Clasping them in her hands she also grabs a $5 bill and heads out to the Honda sitting in the driveway. She takes off down the street, without bothering to buckle her seatbelt. "After all," she thinks to herself, "it's only a five minute trip to the store." A couple blocks down the street, she notices a light turn green. She's happy to make the light as the intersection grows nearer. She presses on the gas a little more, just to be sure she'll make it. She doesn't seem to notice the semi-truck about ready to run the red light on the crossing

street. The driver, obviously off in his own world, doesn't even begin to slow down. As Corrine enters the intersection, her sights are on the store a couple blocks down. "Hope there's a good place to park," she thinks to herself. Suddenly, there's a noise loud enough to pop someone's eardrum. Glass shatters in every direction along with the splatter of blood and the sound of angry dreams screaming because they can never be made true. Corrine was dead.

Now Corrine didn't break any rules. It couldn't legally be her "fault." However Corrine died, so whose "fault" it is, doesn't matter. Corrine was simply going through the motions of driving which wasn't enough. Had she learned the skills of being a defensive driver, her dreams might have seen reality. However with both parents working full-time and the pressures of getting your license when your sixteen, Corrine learned just enough to squeak by her driver's exam. After all she knew how to stop at red lights and change lanes. That was enough . . . . or was it? Obviously not. Had Corrine been able to enroll in a driver's education program at her school, this horrible event may not have occured. However Corrine's school did not have a drivers ed program and her future was left to suffer the consequences.

It is for this and many other reason's that we need a driver's ed program at Sunnyview. There are many parents who don't always have time or are too lazy and unwilling to help their kids really learn how to drive defensively. There are also parents who might not have cars, licenses or the money to pay for private training. It's not fair to exclude them from the rights of being a safe driver. Through driver's ed class kids can learn tricks to avoid accidents, spot drunk drivers and learn their car is a lital weapon while bringing insurance rates down at the same time. Who knows what would have happened if Corrine's school would have had drivers ed. If only we could turn back the clock and go back . . .

Corrine saw the light turn green. As she grew closer to the intersection she covered her break while looking left than right. She noticed a big semi approaching at a quick speed. She realized he wasn't going to stop! Slamming on her breaks her car stopped just in time as the monster whizzed by without notice of her. Taking a deep breath, Suzie drove on through the intersection and pulled into the store parking lot a couple blocks down the street.

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PERSUASIVE-Middle

It is fairly easy to understand each writer's position in the following samples. The support, however, tends to be general, not convincing.

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Dear new course committee:
Hello, my name is Loretta Rankin. I am currently a junior attending Ratcliffe High School. I am writing in regards to suggest a new course in my school. The new course that I'm suggesting is a type of course that would allow students to learn about a variety of subjects. The subject could consist of the following: basis business skills, History and world affairs, childcare, pottery or art, law, and environmental issues. These subjects are just a few suggestions. I feel our school board should come to a consensus about what subjects should be taught in this new course. This course would have to have a different kind of atmosphere than a regular classroom in order for all these subjects to be taught in one room. My suggestion is that we have one teacher teach a subject to about 20-25 students. The students could move to a different subject every 3-4 weeks. The students could be graded with an overall average grades of the different subjects. This class would last 2 regular class periods, so that the teacher could get some good quality time in.

I think this new course would be great for the school, not only by an improvement in attendance, since the students schedule their own classes and this course would be an elective, they naturally would attend this course. Plus, the teachers could benifit from teaching a subject they enjoy to students who really want to learn.

Thank you for your time and please consider my suggestion for this new course.

For the best interest of students I am recommending the new course, Drivers Training, to be added to the regular class schedule. This would be an elective course for the people who do not choose to drive a motor vehicle

Drivers training would be very useful during the regular school day because a very high percentage of upperclassmen drive. This course would help young drivers learn the rules of the road, the safety laws, and help them understand their vehicles better in certain life-threatening situations.

This class would also teach young drivers the importance of not driving while intoxicated, and the statistics of teen accidents because of this problem.

If this class was made a part of the regular school schedule it would benefit old and young drivers on the road, making it safer for everyone to drive.

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To: The New Course Committee

I propose a class that would enable for most every student to decide an interest in which they could seek in the near future.

Probably scheduled for the last period of the school day, students, escorted by a teacher or teachers, would visit various types of businesses or job sites. They could spend a day observing or maybe even a whole week.

By visiting, it would give each student an idea of what they would like to pursue as a career, and decide their goals for after high school. There are classes currently in the curriculum, but the jobs are usually only for high school students to work part-time. The reason why people enter college is to prepare themselves for a full-time career. Many college students decide on their college major as a junior. Knowing what jobs are available before hand, could benefit the student's mind, and most importantly, his life.

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PERSUASIVE-Low

The reader has to work from hints and innuendoes in these papers. Even the basic propositions are stated in sketchy terms; and these writers have not begun pulling together the support needed to defend a position.

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A new coarse you may consider is a rock climbing coarse. It would be an elective and would teach you everything you need to know about rock climbing. Students would be able to use their knowledge from the class in the future.

If your'e a person who does not trust people, or who is scared of hieghts, wants to do something new or have a good oppurtunity to make some new friends and have lots of fun, this would be the class for you.

Rockclimbing Lessons in the city cost lots of money. Now it would be availible for highschoolers who always wanted to rockclimb, those who never had time or those who can't pay for lessons. This could be the starting of a very well worth expierence.

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Dear Committee

I am a Junior at Stanford High School graduating class of 1992 and the new course that I would like to se be taught is Autoshop because we got woodshop + metalshop but no Autoshop.

The reason why I think we should have Autoshop. Because kids who go to college for four years and that college has a Autoshop so that kids can take it if they want to. What I am trying to say is that this school needs to have a Autoshop so that we can learn alot about cars and stuff like that so that we can be able to have a trade of this Autoshop.

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Playing Soccer

I think soccer could be so very important, because a lot of students can play and enjoy it at the same time, this course of soccer it's going to put you in shape, good condition and let you play it as the great players of the world. But, it depends on you. If any student spend a little of his own time practicing this sport, he would control it as any other player.

This sport can also be played by girls. You have to know the time it takes to be in good condition for being a good athletic, but it has some rules that you have to follow, so you put yourself you want to be, following those rules as they have to be followed, that will be the key for your future game on the Olimpics. It's the kind of game that sometimes you're going to win but other times you're going to lose, but it doesnt matter, the point of this is that you will have a good time at your school. I can say it because I had the experiense where a lot of students had played this game, but they want to play it at anyone time. If you want to keep a good record talking about being the best player, you need to have interest in this sport as a good benefit in your life.

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EXPOSITORY-High

These strong expository pieces are clear, informative, and detailed. All show great sensitivity to audience. The first has particularly striking voice. The other examples could be even further strengthened with specific examples or short anecdotes.

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I am an adventurer. Finding adventure seems to come as easy to me as breathing. How do you become one who's seems to be always embarking on a new, exciting path? There are five essentials to the art of adventure: 1. courage 2. self-disiplane, 3. stamina 4. a sense of fear 5. being knowledgable, in part, to what you are doing.

My life is one large example of these five elements. My explorations of large cities, alone; biking trails in the middle of nowhere while the sun is sinking . . . . fast! Or just routine wanderings of new places. The one adventure that thrills me beyond my wildest hopes is snowboarding. The adventure of all adventures!

The trees, a blur to your left, a 30 ft. drop off to your right and you and your board screaming by everything with poised madness. The essence of snowboarding and adventure.

Reality check. You strap yourself to a not-very-big piece of plexiglass and descend down a mountain at ungodly speeds. What kind of lunatic does this? I do.

I fear the slopes evertime I begin a run. If one does not fear, the thrill and excitement of it all, does not truly exist. To fear what you are doing also heightens your awareness of possibly dangerous situations. Thus, enabling you to foresee and forego them.

You must be courageous but not a mad person on the slopes. It's an act of courage riding wind blown lifts to the top of a junction. Courage entwined with self-disipline creates a self-assured, willingly safe, but still extremely exciting person. You must know yourself and be able to assess situations, intelligently, to be a true adventurer.

Skill comes with experience but never go into a situation, whether it be snowboarding or wandering the Red Light District in Amsterdam, without collecting information on what you are doing or where you are going. Base your adventures on knowledge, whether planned or spontaneous. Your adventures will mean more to you if you can come out of them alive. Bruised is o.k. but dead is a different matter.

Don't give up. That, I think, is the most important essential. Stamina is something one develops and becomes accustomed to. Adventure thrives on stamina because the harder and longer you can healthily push yourself, the more you can experience. When carving a really fine wall and then get cut off and slam, I don't sit in the snow pouting or cursing. I don't give up on myself. I get up and rage the entire way down, I make-up for the mishap. I do it because I know I can.

I thrive on my willingness to try anything at least once. When doing this I make the best attempt at understanding, learning, and trying the new task. I make the best of the situation. I don't give up on anything or anyone. Most importantly, I don't give up on myself. That is the spirit of a true adventurer.

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Writing

I do something each day that most people detest the very thought of doing. I write. Writing, for me, is a way to talk to the world, to release ideas and be able to share them with the world. I write fiction, and to me there are three different types that fiction shows itself in: novels, poems, and shortstories. All three are different, and require different tactics to accomplish. For now, I will describe what it is like to work on a novel.

It's the idea that triggers it all. The idea of a good plot, well rounded characters, and a good conflict, show itself in a variety of ways. For example, the idea can come from an inspiration. There have been several times that I have looked at a poster, and taken an idea for a plot from it. Dreams can sometimes inspire ideas as well. They can be as far out and different as posters, but sometimes they can be more real because they are a part of you. Real life events, like things seen on the news, or a strange event that happened during the day, can trigger the thought, "But what if this had happened?"

When I am ready to write, I put the events of the book through my mind to be judged on interest level and creativeness. If it lacks anything, I add thoughts and ideas until the plot is acceptable to me. Before I put actual words on paper, however, I make sure that a dictionary, thesaurus, and research notes are close at hand to be looked at from time to time. No novel, or at least well-written novel, can be done without research. Without research, the idea can be proven faulty, which can ruin the entire storyline.

When I have all of this intact, I begin my actual writing. My first thought is to get words down on paper, which helps to solidify the idea, before I go to a computer. I tend to do a lot of what I call "paper writing" after tests or in the last few minutes of class. Sometimes, I have a chance to write at home. Then, I prefer to write when it's either very early, or very late in the day. This is the time when no one is around, and I can listen to my music and write without any distractions. The same circumstances prevail when it is time to write a final draft on the computer. I like to work in an atmosphere that I have created, unmarred by anyone or anything else.

To me, writing is fun. There are definate rewards if you can get your works published. Even if you don't, though, it is a good hobby to widen your vocabulary and your interests. It helps to let out the person inside of you, and get the sense of, "I am me." Often times, that sense is all we want in life.

* * * * * *

On a Scale from One to Ten . . .

Everyone is supposedly a critic. Even those who believe they aren't, somehow have criticized something. I, quite proudly, am a film critic. My belief is, I'm good at it, too.

This talent of film reviewing, though rare in 16-year-olds, brings me closer to my peers in that when they want to see a film, they ask me if it is worth it. I'm usually trustworthy for them, also.

Film reviewing is not hereditary. One must learn to do it, and having a passion for motion pictures doesn't hurt, either. But, the most important ingredient in the mind of a film critic, is you must respect the ideas presented.

To begin with, you must watch the film closely. Upon its end, record your first impression. This first impression is important for if you change it for the better, more credit must be given to the film at hand.

Next, take a day or two to think about the film. Answer a few simple questions such as: "Did I laugh when I was suppose to laugh?" "Was I scared when I was suppose to be scared?" "How was the acting?" If you answer "yes" to these questions, and did not like the film . . . it's really not unusual.

If possible, watch the film for a second time, keeping an eye more on detail than plot. Concentrate on the subfields of the film such as cinematography (camera-work), music, abundance or lack of detail, and certain good or bad scenes.

Finally, create your final impression, and write your review. In writing your review, you must first acknowledge the main actors and actresses and the film's director. Then, summarize the plot . . . very briefly. Introduce the main characters and conflicts, but never give away the film's end.

Do not go by what others think! Write <u>your</u> review and express <u>your</u> opinions.

I believe I possess an interesting talent of film reviewing, and am not afraid to say it. From Victor Fleming's "The Wizard of Oz" to Martin Scorsese's "Taxi Driver," I'm an expert. Now, bring out the critic in you.

* * * * * *

EXPOSITORY-Middle

These samples reveal many strengths, though each needs some work. The aerobics piece is clear and comprehensible, but fairly predictable; we would like to benefit from this writer's special insights. The salmon fishing piece is less predictable, but assumes some basic knowledge many readers may lack. It includes some good tips, though! The lesson on lying is good fun; some entertaining examples would lift this piece--already full of voice--to new heights.

* * * * * *

Excercising is a good way to stay in shape. To do this you must start out at a pace that is right for you. There are many kinds of techniques for excercising. Here are two examples of excercising, running and aerobics.

Aerobics is a fun way to exercise. You can get into an aerobics class at a gym or just buy a tape and do it at home. Before you start the full aerobic exercise you should do a warm-up, to stretch your muscles. If you don't do a warm-up you can pull a muscle or injure yourself. After doing the warm-ups you can begin the aerobics. Don't over exert yourself, maintain a level that is right for you. Once you have done the aerobics for about twenty minutes, you must then do a cool down to bring your heart rate back down at a steady pace.

Another form of excercising is running. Most people enjoy running more than aerobics. It is more convenient for most people. You can run in the morning, the middle of the day or in the evening. The only precaution to running

is, always run with a partner, especially in the evening. Many people have gotten killed, running alone. Running can be a fun exercise. But like aerobics, you must stretch before doing them and don't over exert yourself.

Both of these excercising techniques are fun and will keep you in good shape if you do them at least three times a week.

* * * * * *

To be an expert in the field of Salmon Fishing, you must first learn a few important steps to be Successful.

First of all, select a fishing rod with enough sensibility that you will be able to tell if a fish strikes. Also, a reel will be needed with line strong enough a fish cannot break, but light enough that will not pull a fish in without an exciting fight.

Now you will need to invest in some tackle for the trip. You will need, line for leader material, hooks, swivels, lead weights, corkies to float the bait of the river bottom, and either Salmon eggs or Sandshrimp for bait. You will also need a fishing tag and liscense.

After you have everything needed, it's time to learn how to tie knots. First, cut a 15 inch piece of leader of the spool of line. Tie a hook on one end of the leader and test the knot. Always test knots by pulling the line tight with both hands and pulling to check for a break, but be careful not to hook yourself. Now slide a corkie on the line with the hook, and tie a swivel on the other end. Slide a weight on the mainline and tie it to the other side of the swivel. Test the strength of both knots on the swivel.

Now you are ready to find a place to fish.

* * * * * *

Lying

Lying is an art. If done right a lie can get you out of any bad situation or, get you out of being blamed for something you know you did.

Lying takes wit, charm, and quick thinking. There are several guidelines to be followed in telling a good lie, wich will be discussed in this essay to help you on your way to becoming a better, if not excellent liar.

First comes body language. Often people can tell if your lying by watching how you stand, sit, & move your body, rather than your face. Here are a few simple rules. Don't fidget, play with your hands or any jewerly your wearing, & don't move your hands & arms around alot. This, can make you look nervous.

Next is facial expressions. Try to keep a poker face, don't smile, you may end up laughing; don't frown, it may make you look confused or not sure of what you're saying; & don't look angry, or your lie may turn into an arguement. Most important, try not to get too nervous & start sweating. Dry your hands & face before lying.

After this comes the actual telling of the lie. First, state the facts. Such as date, time, where you were, & who you were with. Of course most of your facts will be lies too. The date should be one to two days before your lie, but not too far back so that you cant remember anything. Who you were with & where you were can be another lie altogether. Simply say "I know who I was with, but I don't remember their name, & I know where I was but I don't know how I got there." Last, & not the best thing to do is blame it on someonelse. You can blame it on almost anyone from relativees, any you know who is crazy, any animal, or someone you know is a liar.

Now you're ready to lie. Make sure your ready both mentally & physically. Get all your facts together, dry off your hands & face, calm down, & then when you know you're completely ready, lie.

* * * * * *

EXPOSITORY-Low

These writers struggle to share information, but the reader must draw many inferences, relying on what he/she already knows, to make sense of the message.

* * * * * *

EXPERT

I like to ride motor cycles. I have been riding for about eleven years. I have had about Six different machines in about eleven years. I like to go riding every other weekend If I can. Ever time I get back from riding, I have to clean work on the machines to keep it running good for the next time I go riding In the hill mud snow sand.

I have to wash it oil the chain so it doesn't ware out the next time I go out riding all day. Then I check the oil add If nessary. Then I check the water level so it doesn't get to hot and blow up like they have done before.

I have rode eleven years and only had one bad wreck. Thats when I broke my leg and was in the hospital for over a month and I was in a body cast from six weeks but I didn't stop riding then. I got right back on after I got out of my cast. Thats what I an an Expert on.

* * * * * *

My Best Thing

The thing I am best at is Science. And the way I learned it is through hard work, Consintration, Studing, and the ability to think hard. It takes alot of reSherch and observation to truly make it stay in your mind. You also have to be Patient for this kikd of activity, Because no one gets an experiment right on the first time. So that means test after test until you get it right. When you get into Science you have got to keep the Bad things in mind Such as: all the Stress, taking your job home, the Sleepless nights, & the chances of dying from your own experiment.

I think that Science is the Best Job Fieled to get into, Because it is high paying, interesting and filled with entertainment. In this job field their is always something new to do. One day, I'll be in the SCience field, And I'll Be famous.

* * * * * *

Keeping my body in good shape is something that I do a lot and I also study a lot about it. Although I admit that I am not yet an expert on the subject, I know enough. (A lot of what I will write about is based on my own experiments and theories.)

Now first of all, you should know that there are many different factors that help lead to good health. They are grouped into four different groups: breathe clean, fresh air as much as you can; Not any one of these is more important than another - each one is just as important as all the others.

The first one, breathe clean, fresh air as much as you can, is pretty much self-explanatory. But to be more specific; by clean I am talking about air that isnt polluted such as with smoke, smog, etc. When I say fresh air, I'm talking about air that isnt old and used.

Miscellaneous Student Papers

Too Short

Sometimes students did not submit enough text to enable raters to evaluate fairly. When the sample is too short, such as the following examples, it is impossible to see how the idea develops, get a feel for the fluency or evaluation control in organization. One paper has evidence of a clustering activity but no text was written to accompany it. In these cases papers were coded "too short" and returned to the students without any scores.

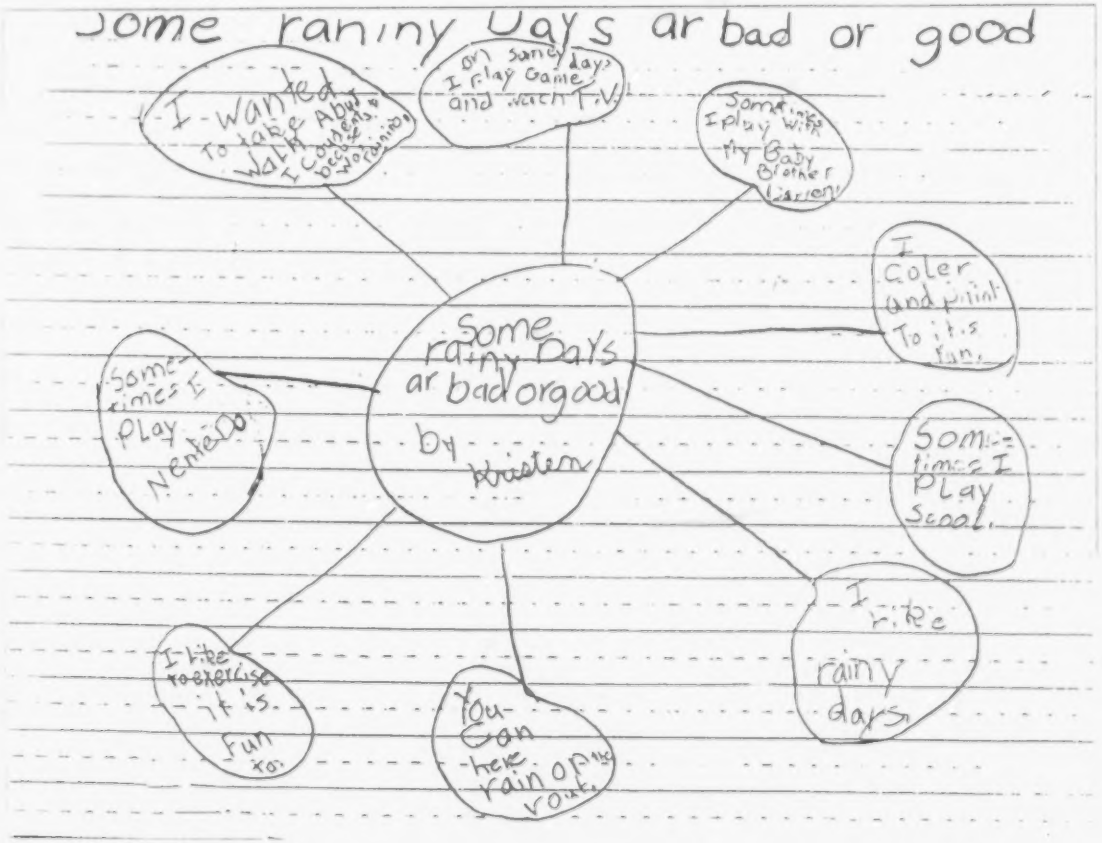
* * * * * *

One time i remember that i help a frand to do hes homework to do a betere work and hes homework. And i help my frads to make a betere work.

* * * * * *

I had to drive my grandma to the clinic. I had to because noone was there to drive her then we came home. then she rewurded me. That made me fell happy.

* * * * * *


some raniny Uays ar bad or good
I wanted to take A Bow walk I Covered soccer Wordmin
on sunny days I play Game and watch T.V
Some times I play with my Baby Brother Darien
Some rainy Days ar bad or good
by Kristen
I Coler and print To it.s fun.
Some-times I Play Nentendo
Some-times I Play Scool.
I like rainy days
I like to exercise It is fun too.
You Can here rain on the rout.

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Off Mode

The following papers are examples of students' work that was "off mode." These students went in a completely different direction than was intended by the prompt.

In the first example, "Eagles," the student was asked to write in the Imaginative mode ("make up a story . . .") but the writing is clearly expository. The writer's purpose in the paper is to inform or explain and not to invent or create.

The second paper was intended to be a persuasive piece which, like the first example, turned out to be expository. This student writer told "how to" write a persuasive piece rather than taking a stand and trying to convince the reader of something.

In many cases students were successfully able to combine different modes in the development of their topic without losing the focus of the original idea. In fact, some of the strongest papers were those that, for example, used a narrative to help strengthen their expository paper or used imaginative elements to help persuade. These papers received a mode score.

The bottom line that raters were asked to consider in assigning a mode score was whether or not the paper fulfilled the purpose of the intended mode. If the answer was "no," then the paper was marked "off mode." However, these papers were evaluated in the six traits even if they did not receive a mode score.

* * * * * *

Eagles

The eagles are indangerd species. thay are killed every year by farmers that don't care less, eagles are the nashel Birds for there eye sight and for there smartness, the eagles are very big and can cary off a three year old child, there main foods are fish, mice, rabbits and rats, the eagle can see a moUs 10 yards away, there wing spand is itlest one foot long, the eagle is itlest three feet long.

* * * * * *

If I had to persuade, or convince someone into not doing something, I would tell them what could happen to them, and give them examples. I would also show them clipings from magazines and new papers if it had some thing to do with them. I would also tell them what else they could do, and if I had done it tell them what it was like.

I might even try and bribe them if it was that important. If it was drugs or something as bad, I might even tell his/her parents and or police, after talking to them.

I think it is important that someone should be able to convince or persuade some one because there are alot of times that you need to know how to persuade and convince some one at some time.

* * * * * *

ODDITIES

Here are a couple of papers that caught the readers' attention strictly because of their unique format. One paper was written in columns and the other reads backward from the bottom of the page to the top. Kids do the darndest things!

; the final copy of your paper here.

", BACKWARDS STORY A READ DADDY
BECAUSE" RESPONDS WIFE HIS "? THIS DO
THEY MUST WHY") ASKS, CRYING, CHILD
YOUNGEST HIS. DEATH HIS TO SLOWLY
GRINDED BE FATHER THERE SEE TO
FORCED BEING, OPEN TAPED EYELIDS,
WATCHED FAMILY HIS. DISK SANDING
GIANT THE INTO FIRST FEET HIM
FED ARM THE AS BACK LAID MAN THE
. DEATH TO SANDED BE WOULD HE
. SETENCE DEATH HIS FOR INSTRUMENT
THE HEARD HE OFF DRAGGED WAS
HE AS "GUILTY!" EXCLAIMING JURER
HEAD THE BY INTERRUPTED WAS
THINKING MANS THE. NOW COMMON
WAS ACTS INNOCENT FOR PUNISHMENT.
. AMERICA OVER TOOK AND BOMBED HAD
HUSSEIN SINCE CHANGED THINGS. DECADE
THIS LOOSE BROKEN HAD HELL ALL
. AMERICAN AN AS FREDOMS HIS OF
BOUNDARIES THE VIOLATED HAD HE
BUT, SOME AS BREAKING. VICIOUS A SUCH
NOT. LAW THE BROKEN HAD HE, JURY
THE FROM VERDICT THE FOR WAITING, SILENT
WERE ALL. COURTROOM THE IN SITTING WAS HE

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I	would	have
Liked	to	keep
My	math	papers
because	won	Im
Olden	I	can
See	how	good
I	did	won
I	was	Little.
I	would	have
Liked	to	keep
My	grandma	around
forever	because	She
was	nice.	My
Next.	door	Neighbor
reminase	me	of
her.	She	yost
Of:	Gave	the
things	Like	pies.
She	yost	Of
Gave	She.	Sodupop

Chapter 3:
The Teaching of Writing As a Process

Introduction

When writers work, they *usually* take time to plan and generate ideas, organize their thoughts, write more than one draft, rethink the original idea--perhaps share it with a colleague--revise, edit and polish. Even after all those steps, not everything gets published. Some things are tossed out, or tucked away so the ideas can simmer for awhile until the writer feels ready to return to the piece.

This way of interacting with writing, of nurturing one's writing through growth and change, has often been called the "writing process." The term is not meant to suggest one single best way of writing, but only to remind us that writing isn't assembled in one quick step. It takes care, thought, involvement and, perhaps most of all, time.

Plenty of time to write and rewrite is the ideal. All writers must sometimes dash off notes in a hurry or put together letters or reports without enough information or time to revise. That's real life. But writing that grows over time takes on the flavor and insight of the writer who produced it, and often develops the power to move an audience.

Great advantages come with teaching writing using a process approach. Students who have time to explore, share, borrow, write and rethink their writing often find they have more to say--or that the tiniest of ideas can sometimes evolve, with thinking and refinement, into well-defined and personalized topics about which the writer cares deeply. Probably, nothing so affects the quality of writing as a writer's love of his/her topic.

Process Approach in the Classroom

There is no one way to describe writing as a process--and no one way to teach it using a process-based approach. But here are some characteristics that distinguish most successful process-based programs:

1. Students write less to demonstrate mastery, please the teacher, or practice specific language skills, and MORE to learn, discover, clarify, express themselves, deepen understanding, and pass along information they deem important.

2. Topics are not always assigned. Students have some freedom to select their own topics--which for many students is not a simple task. On the other hand, students are sometimes required to wrestle with an assigned topic, and in order to make the writing work, they must learn to define and personalize that topic in a meaningful way.

3. Though deadlines must be respected, time limits and word limits are generally under the control of the writer.

4. Students have time to **prewrite** (warm up, think or talk about the topic, play with ideas, brainstorm, outline, do word webs or clusters, read, interview others), **draft** (get ideas down on paper rapidly without concern for mechanical correctness), **share** to find out how others respond (through a teacher-student conference or in a writing group), **revise** (actually rethink and reshape ideas, redefining concepts, moving information around, taking pieces out, adding new information), **edit** (proofread and correct) and **publish** (make books, send writing to a publisher, read aloud, post on the bulletin board, put into a portfolio).

5. Opportunity is provided for all the steps described above, but they are not followed in lockstep fashion. Some student writers need more time than others for prewriting; for some, drafting is the most effective form of prewriting--they need to plunge right in! Some writers need time to reshape several drafts; others feel comfortable with only two. Some writers want and need to share each piece; others are very selective about what and when to share. There is no one right way.

6. Every person in the classroom is part of the writing community and serves as a resource for every other person. This means that students listen to and respond to one another's work in ways modeled by the teacher, borrow and share ideas for writing topics and support other writers in the process.

7. Students write for a variety of purposes and in a variety of forms (modes).

8. Students write for real and diverse audiences, not only for the teacher.

9. Students are given the option to read aloud what they've written and discuss it with peers or with the teacher.

10. Students are responsible--with support from teachers and peers--for their own revision and editing.

11. Student writers think of themselves as writers and feel in control of their own work.

12. The teacher is a writer too, and shares with the class the process by which his/her writing grows from rudimentary idea to final draft.

Benefits of a Process Approach

Here are some commonly recognized benefits of teaching writing as a process:

1. Students find writing more meaningful because it reflects work they care about.

2. Students learn not only the mechanics of writing, but such skills as identifying important topics, developing ideas fully, organizing ideas in ways that will be meaningful to a specific audience, and enriching writing with a personal voice that brings the topic to life.

3. Students have a positive attitude about writing since it is an outlet for expression, not just a means of fulfilling a requirement.

4. Students sharpen thinking skills, learning to make connections, draw inferences, compare and contrast, analyze and evaluate.

5. Student writers gain confidence and feel a real sense of pride in work that they personally plan and see through to completion.

Some Myths About Writing Process

Remember that a writing process approach doesn't have to be the same for all students--nor does it need to follow relentless patterns of prewriting on Monday, drafting on Tuesday, revising on Wednesday, etc. Here, adapted from the work of Donald Graves, are some myths about the writing process:

1. *Children ought to revise everything they compose.*

   Some writing isn't worth revising--or saving. Not every piece of writing turns out. On the other hand, some pieces do please the writer on the very first run; it can happen!

2. *Children should publish each piece of writing.*

   Most writers would be horrified at the very thought. Some writing is just for the writer alone--or has another purpose which doesn't require making it public. Also, writers need the freedom to move in a new direction when a piece just isn't coming together.

3. *Children should make each piece of writing last four days.*

   Sometimes it's tempting to think that writing instruction would be easier if it were this neat, but would it? The truth is, it's impossible to predict how long it will take to write a story of friendship, or complete an interview for the school paper, or craft a poem linking a recent experience to an early childhood memory. In order to do their best work--work that comes from the heart--student writers really need the freedom to work at their own pace.

4. *Children should share each piece with the entire class.*

   The benefits of sharing writing with a real audience cannot be denied--and it feels good to share when a piece of writing is really coming together and the writer is eager, and ready, to hear the response of an audience. But when a piece is private or is one that no longer engages the writer's own attention, audience response may be more of an intrusion than a help. Writers need choices about what and when to share.

5. *Children should choose all their topics.*

   Selecting topics challenges student writers to define what is important to them and to an audience, and to narrow a topic in a way that makes it manageable. Some guidance from a teacher, however, can also help ensure that writers branch out, try new things, and sometimes (tough as it is) take on a topic they simply would not try unless nudged.

   --abstracted from Donald Graves, Teachers and Children at Work. Portsmouth, New Hampshire: Heinemann, 1983.

Note: For a complete bibliography listing and annotating sixteen useful resources on teaching writing, see Appendix.

How Does a Process Approach "Fit" with the Six Analytic Traits?

Understanding the qualities of good writing is one important key to managing revision effectively. Student writers who set about revising a piece of writing sometimes feel overwhelmed because they don't know where to begin. When they are familiar with the six analytic traits, though, they have a sense of what specific things to look for in reshaping their writing. Below is a list of questions writers might use to focus revision(s) related to each trait.

IDEAS

Does the message make sense?
Are details important and interesting?

ORGANIZATION

Does the introduction hook the reader?
Does the organizational structure support the idea development?
Does the piece come to closure at the end?

VOICE

Does the writing sound like the writer--not someone else?
Is the voice natural, spontaneous, lively?

WORD CHOICE

Are the words accurate and precise?
Are the verbs strong?
Are images vivid, colorful?

SENTENCE FLUENCY

Does the writing flow smoothly?
Do sentences vary in length and structure?

CONVENTIONS

Is the piece free of distracting mechanical errors?
Does the writing show signs of careful editing/proofreading?

Student writers who know the traits and who have scored and discussed numerous student papers internalize questions like these, and think of them--almost subconsciously--while writing and revising. They learn, in other words, to adopt a reader's (as well as a writer's) perspective.

In short, then, it is in the step of revision where the link from traits to process is strongest.

Here, courtesy of Ronda Woodruff, fourth grade teacher from the Beaverton School District, Beaverton, Oregon (and one of the originators of the Oregon Analytic Model), is a summary of the writing process that shows how and where the analytic traits might fit. This particular approach is one Ronda has used with both fourth and sixth grade student writers:

During the **prewriting** phase, students brainstorm, narrow and focus the topic, and make decisions: Who is the audience? What form should the writing take (e.g., report, poem, story, persuasive argument, interview)?

The second phase is for **rough draft** writing--getting ideas down quickly.

Phase three calls for **reading aloud**--not to a group yet, though. This is a chance for the writer to read to him/herself, and to ask: Does it make sense? Is my message clear?

Phase four--**writing groups**. This is the time for sharing. Ronda suggests three students per response group, using a model that asks students to paraphrase what they hear, tell what they like or what they feel or see during the reading, and ask questions of the writer.

Next--time to **revise**. This is where the first five traits come in--everything but Conventions. However, students can begin slowly, a trait at a time. They don't need to revise for everything at once, nor for every trait every time. They can build skills slowly, perhaps just concentrating on Ideas at first, or just on Voice--then adding more as their skills in revision grow.

Phase six calls for **editing**--and this is where Conventions come in. This is the clean-up phase, preparation for publishing, and is very different from revision, which allows for review of the whole piece, including ideas and internal structure. The focus here is on correctness in spelling, usage and mechanics.

Phase seven is production of the **final copy**, and phase eight **sharing or publishing**--which might be as simple as posting something on a bulletin board or reading it to the class. Or--it might involve actually creating and illustrating a book that becomes part of a school or classroom library collection.

"Scales, criteria, and specific questions which students apply to their own or others' writing also have a powerful effect on enhancing quality. Through using the criteria systematically, students appear to internalize them and bring them to bear in generating new material even when they do not have the criteria in front of them."

--from George Hillocks, Jr.
Research on Written Composition, NCTE, 1986

ANALYTIC TRAIT SCORING: IDEAS AND CONTENT

5 The paper is clear, focused, and interesting. It holds the reader's attention. Relevant anecdotes and details enrich the central theme or storyline. Ideas are fresh and original.

- The writer seems to be writing from experiences and shows insight: a good sense of how events unfold, how people respond to life and to each other.
- Supporting, relevant, telling details give the reader important information that he or she could not personally bring to the text.
- The writer has balance: main ideas stand out.
- The writer seems in control and develops the topic in an enlightening, entertaining way.
- The writer works with and shapes ideas, making connections and sharing insights.

3 The paper is clear and focused, even though the overall result may not be captivating. Support is attempted, but it may be limited, insubstantial, too general, or out of balance with the main ideas.

- The writer may or may not be writing from experience but, either way, has difficulty going from general observations to specifics.
- The reader can often second-guess the plot of the main points of the text.
- Ideas, though reasonably clear, often tend toward the mundane; the reader is not sorry to see the paper end.
- Conclusions or main points seem to echo observations heard elsewhere; only on occasion do they seem to reflect the writer's own thinking.
- Supporting details tend to be skimpy, general or predictable.
- The writer is beginning to define the topic but isn't there yet.

1 The paper lacks a central idea or purpose, or forces the reader to make inferences based on very sketchy details.

- Information is very limited or simply unclear.
- Details do not ring true; they evolve from clichés, platitudes or stereotypes.
- Attempts at development may be minimal or may clutter up the text with random thoughts from which no central theme emerges.
- The writer has not begun to define the topic in any meaningful or personal way.

ANALYTIC TRAIT SCORING: ORGANIZATION

5 The organization enhances and showcases the central idea or theme. The order, structure, or presentation is compelling and moves the reader through the text.

- Details seem to fit where they're placed; sequencing is logical and effective.
- An inviting introduction draws the reader in, and a satisfying conclusion leaves the reader with a sense of resolution.
- Transitions are smooth and weave the separate threads of meaning into one cohesive whole.
- Organization flows so smoothly that the reader hardly thinks about it.

3 The reader can readily follow what's being said, but the overall organization may sometimes be ineffective or too obvious.

- The introduction and conclusion are recognizable, though not so well crafted as the reader might wish.
- Placement or relevance of some details leaves the reader occasionally confused.
- The paper sometimes moves along at a good pace but at other times, bogs down in trivia or speeds along too rapidly.
- Transitions sometimes work well; at other times connections between ideas seem unclear.
- Despite problems, the organization does not seriously get in the way of the main point or storyline.

1 Organization is haphazard and disjointed. The writing lacks direction, with ideas, details or events strung together helter-skelter.

- There is no clearly identifiable introduction or conclusion.
- Transitions are very weak, leaving connections between ideas fuzzy, incomplete or bewildering.
- Noticeable gaps in information confuse and confound the reader.
- Pacing is consistently awkward, so that the reader feels either mired down in trivia or rushed along at a breathless pace.
- Lack of organization ultimately obscures or distorts the main point.

ANALYTIC TRAIT SCORING: VOICE

5 The writer speaks directly to the reader in a way that is individualistic, expressive, and engaging. Clearly, the writer is involved in the text and is writing to be read.

- The paper is honest and written from the heart. It has the ring of conviction.
- The language is natural yet provocative; it brings the topic to life.
- The reader feels a strong sense of interaction with the writer and senses the person behind the words.
- The projected tone and voice clarify and give flavor to the writer's message.

3 The writer seems sincere but not fully involved in the topic. The result is pleasant, acceptable, sometimes even personable, but not compelling.

- The writer seems to weigh words carefully, to keep a safe distance between writer and reader, to avoid risk, and to write what he or she thinks the reader wants.
- The writing tends to hide rather than reveal the writer.
- The writing communicates in an earnest but fairly routine manner, and only occasionally amuses, surprises, delights or moves the reader.
- Voice may emerge strongly on occasion, only to shift or to disappear a line or two later behind a facade of general, vague or abstract language.

1 The writer seems wholly indifferent, uninvolved, or dispassionate. As a result, the writing is flat, lifeless, stiff, or mechanical. It may be (depending on the topic) overly technical or jargonistic.

- The reader has no sense of the writer behind the words and no sense of a real desire on the part of the writer to communicate.
- The writer seems to speak in a kind of monotone that flattens all potential highs or lows of the message.
- The writing communicates on a functional level, at best, without moving or involving the reader at all.
- Delivery is so consistently flat that the reader may find it hard to focus on the message even when the wording seems reasonably clear and correct.

ANALYTIC TRAIT SCORING: WORD CHOICE

5 Words convey the intended message in an interesting, precise, and natural way. The writing is full and rich, yet concise.

- Words are specific and accurate; they seem just right.
- Imagery is strong.
- Powerful verbs give the writing energy.
- Vocabulary may be striking, but it's natural, and never overdone.
- Expression is fresh and appealing; slang is used sparingly.

3 The language is quite ordinary, but it does convey the message: it's functional, even if it lacks punch. Often, the writer settles for what's easy or handy, producing a sort of "generic paper" stuffed with familiar words and phrases.

- The language communicates but rarely captures the reader's imagination.
- The writer rarely experiments with language; however, the paper *may* have some fine moments.
- Attempts at colorful language often seem overdone, calculated to impress.
- Images lack detail and precision.
- Clichés, redundancies and hackneyed phrases are common.
- A few key verbs may liven things up, but equally often, abstract, general or flat language robs the text of power.

1 The writer struggles with a limited vocabulary, groping for words to convey meaning. Often the language is so vague and abstract or so redundant and devoid of detail that only the broadest, most general sort of message comes through.

- Words are consistently dull, colorless or abstract.
- Monotonous repetition or overwhelming reliance on worn, threadbare expressions repeatedly cloud or smother the message.
- Often words simply do not fit the text. They seem imprecise, inadequate or just plain wrong.
- Imagery is very fuzzy or absent altogether; the text is "peopled" only with generalities.
- Verbs are weak and few in number; *is, are, was,* were dominate.

ANALYTIC TRAIT SCORING: SENTENCE FLUENCY

5 **The writing has an easy flow and rhythm when read aloud. Sentences are well built, with consistently strong and varied structure that makes expressive oral reading easy and enjoyable.**

- Sentence structure reflects logic and sense, helping to show how ideas relate. Purposeful sentence beginnings guide the reader readily from one sentence to another.
- The writing sounds natural and fluent; it glides along with one sentence flowing effortlessly into the next.
- Sentences display an effective combination of power and grace.
- Variation in sentence structure and length adds interest to the text.
- Fragments, if used at all, work well.
- Dialogue, if used, sounds natural.

3 **Sentences tend to be mechanical rather than fluid. The text hums along efficiently for the most part, though it may lack a certain rhythm or grace, tending to be more pleasant than musical. Occasional awkward constructions force the reader to slow down or reread.**

- Connections between phrases or sentences may be less fluid than desired.
- The writer shows good control over simple sentence structure but variable control over complex syntax.
- Sentences sometimes vary in length or structure, but for the most part, the writer falls into a pattern and sticks with it.
- Fragments, if used, sometimes seem the result of oversight.
- Dialogue, if used, sometimes rings true but sometimes sounds forced or contrived.
- Sentences, though functional, often lack energy.
- Some parts of the text invite expressive oral reading; others may be a bit stiff.

1 **The paper is difficult to follow or to read aloud. Sentences tend to be choppy, incomplete, rambling, irregular, or just very awkward.**

- Nonstandard English syntax is common. Word patterns are often jarring and irregular, and far removed from the way people usually write or speak.
- Sentence structure does not generally enhance meaning. In fact, it may obscure meaning.
- Many sentences seem disjointed, awkward, confused or nonsensical.
- Word patterns may be monotonous (e.g., subject-verb or subject-verb-object).
- The text does not invite -- and may not even permit -- expressive oral reading.

ANALYTIC TRAIT SCORING: CONVENTIONS

5 The writer demonstrates a good grasp of standard writing conventions (e.g., grammar, capitalization, punctuation, usage, spelling, paragraphing) and uses them effectively to enhance readability. Errors tend to be so few and minor that the reader can easily skim over them unless specifically searching for them.

- Paragraphing tends to be sound and to reinforce the organizational structure.
- Grammar and usage are correct and contribute to clarity and style.
- Punctuation is smooth and guides the reader through the text.
- Spelling is generally correct, even on more difficult words.
- The writer may manipulate conventions -- particularly grammar -- for stylistic effect.
- The writing is sufficiently long and complex to allow the writer to show skill in using a wide range of conventions.
- Only light editing would be required to polish the text for publication.

3 Errors in writing and conventions, while not overwhelming, begin to impair readability. While errors do not block meaning, they tend to be distracting.

- Paragraphs sometimes run together or begin in the wrong places.
- Terminal (end-of-sentence) punctuation is almost always correct; internal punctuation, however, may be incorrect or missing altogether.
- Spelling is usually correct, or reasonably phonetic, on common words.
- Problems with usage are not severe enough to distort meaning.
- The writer may show reasonable control over a very limited range of conventions, but the text may be too simple or too short to reflect real mastery of conventions.
- Moderate editing would be required to polish the text for publication.

1 Numerous errors in usage, sentence structure, spelling, or punctuation repeatedly distract the reader and make the text difficult to read. In fact, the severity and the frequency of errors tend to be so overwhelming that the reader finds it very difficult to focus on the message and must reread for meaning.

- The writer shows very limited skill in using conventions.
- Basic punctuation (including terminal punctuation) tends to be omitted, haphazard or incorrect.
- Spelling errors are frequent, even on common words.
- Paragraphing may be highly irregular, absent altogether, or so frequent (every sentence) that it bears no relation to the organization of the text.
- Extensive editing would be required to polish the text for publication.

MODE RUBRIC: IMAGINATIVE

5 The writing is individual, fresh and vital. It takes an unusual, unpredictable (sometimes off-beat) approach to the topic, surprising and delighting the reader with unanticipated ideas or a new way of looking at things.

- Ideas tend consistently toward the original, the inventive, the unexpected (NOT necessarily bizarre, surreal or outlandish, however).
- The writer's perspective or point of view is highly individual--and often insightful. He/she defines or develops the topic in a refreshingly personal way, making connections no one else has made.
- The writer leads the reader into new territory, where details, twists, and turns cannot readily be anticipated. The reader has the sense of being pulled inside the writer's vision, "suspending disbelief" for a time.
- The writing consistently goes beyond the obvious, enlivening the topic, and challenging the reader to think.
- While ideas often seem spontaneous, they reflect a complexity that suggests the reader has thought the topic through, considered implications, and sought a way of exploring the topic that is his/hers alone.

3 Every now and then, the writing shows sparks of the unexpected or inventive (e.g., an image or plot twist that works well), but also lapses into predictability (clinched plots, stereotyped characters), echoing the writing of others.

- Moments of the original or unusual dot the writing; but they are interspersed with more ordinary passages in which the writer's imagination seems "at rest".
- The writer;s perspective or point of view seems to be still evolving; it reflects some good powers of observation, but is not yet striking in its individuality or insight.
- The reader may feel entertained or intrigued by some passages, yet the writer covers enough old ground that it is hard to let go of one's own reality and "buy into" the test.
- Ideas are clear enough, but are just beginning to show a hint of the complexity, depth, or vitality that comes when a writer stretches the bounds of his/her imagination.

1 The paper lacks a main storyline. It may be bits and pieces of several stories, an "all about" paper that tells no story, or an unelaborated list of events the writer has not yet pulled together to create a meaningful story.

- Not all elements needed to create a complete, unified story are present; the writer could not assemble a story from what is now at hand.
- The writer does not seem to set up a situation, build to any main or high point, or provide an ending or sense of resolution; in short, there is no story.
- Details do not go together in a unified way, or they lack movement, i.e., nothing happens or changes.
- The organizational structure is not chronological and does not seem suited to the narrative mode. There is no clear sequence of events.
- An attempt to paraphrase what the writer has said does not produce a story.

MODE RUBRIC: EXPOSITORY

5 The paper consistently presents information in a way that expands the reader's knowledge or enhances the reader's understanding through a carefully crafted mix of key points and critical support.

- Ideas are unambiguous and fully explained.
- The paper makes a point the reader can readily grasp.
- Facts, examples or explanations provide strong support.
- The reader has a sense of learning something or understanding an issue/topic better.
- The writer seems to be working from a strong base of information and can select what will help the reader most.
- The writer shows a concern for the reader, and consistently presents information in a way that contributes to the reader's understanding.

3 The paper presents some important information, but the reader feels about halfway home in terms of understanding the point the writer is trying to make. The result is a mix of helpful information, together with some fuzzy or incomplete points.

- Ideas are reasonably clear, but the reader needs to make some inference.
- The writer makes a general point, or points, but hasn't narrowed or fine-tuned the topic quite enough yet.
- Facts, examples or explanations provide marginally adequate (but not strong) support.
- Some parts of the paper seem repetitive or predictable.
- The writer seems to have just enough information to write about this topic, but not enough to anticipate and address all the reader's questions.
- The writer seems aware of the reader, but often tends to explain what is already obvious, or to make assumptions about the reader's knowledge that are not warranted.
- The writer attempts to explain or inform, but the power of the paper to enhance the reader's understanding is somewhat limited.

1 The paper is very limited in its capacity to inform or enlighten the reader. The writing is very unclear, incomplete or both.

- Ideas are extremely limited or hard to understand, even if the reader tries to draw inferences based on what is there.
- The paper cannot seem to get beyond lists or generalizations; it is more puzzling or confusing than enlightening.
- The writer does not seem to have enough information to write about this topic. Support is very weak or nonexistent.
- The reader has a difficult time gleaning any knowledge, insight or understanding from the text.

MODE RUBRIC: PERSUASIVE

5 The central issue is clearly stated, and elaborated as necessary to indicate in-depth understanding on the part of the writer. The writer's position is very clear, and the primary argument or proposed plan is presented in an effective and compelling way.

- The writer takes a definite stand and sticks with it; he/she may show sensitivity to other viewpoints, but does not waffle or shift sides part way through the argument.
- The writer indicates a thorough understanding of the issues involved, and narrows or focuses the topic in a way that helps the reader zero in on key issues, too.
- Support is extensive and convincing. The writer generally offers more than a single reason for his/her position, and does not rely strictly on opinion or emotional pleas.
- If it is important to consider (and refute) possible counter arguments, the writer does so, but in a way that makes the presentation enlightening, not confusing.
- There is enough information to guide the reader in making a sound decision on this issue.
- The reader feels convinced/persuaded OR (at least) develops a real appreciation and respect for the writer's position.

3 The central issue is stated clearly, but without sufficient elaboration to indicate any in-depth understanding. Although it is fairly clear which side the writer is on, the main arguments may not be well-developed or presented in a compelling way.

- The most obvious, well-worn arguments are usually in place (e.g., there may be enough there to persuade those who already agree); but the writer rarely digs for the solid, sound evidence that could really enable a skeptical reader to see things in a new light.
- Support is fairly credible, but tends to be general, limited or predictable.
- Some arguments may seem tentative or a bit lame.
- The writer may rely too much on just one argument; or may rely almost as much on opinion and emotion as on strong evidence or the wisdom of experience.
- The writer has given enough thought to the topic to take a position and defend it with some feeling, but has not yet assembled enough critical evidence, reasons or logical arguments to guide others in making a good decision on this issue.

1 It may be hard to infer the central issue without knowing the prompt or question asked. The writer either does not take a clear stand (e.g., just makes general, noncommittal comments), or else simply expresses an unsupported, unelaborated opinion.

- The writer may begin with one position, then totally and arbitrarily change course, as if just now realizing his/her true feelings.
- The writer's understanding of key issues seems as yet limited; there is little or no information that would really help a reader think through the questions(s) at hand.
- The writer who takes a stand tends to rely far more on emotional pleas (e.g., "Everyone hates school uniforms...") than on well-thought-out reasons that would convince the reader.

- Arguments are very weak, hard to follow or limited strictly to the writer's opinion (e.g., "Year-round school is a dumb idea").
- The reader feels either unconvinced or unsure what position the writer wishes him/her to take.

MODE RUBRIC: NARRATIVE

5 The paper has a clear, complete and strong storyline (e.g., presentation and resolution of a problem) that is easy to recognize, follow and paraphrase.

- The writing seems complete. The writer sets the story up and finishes it. The result is a piece of writing that stands alone as a whole story.
- The writer sets the story up with a real lead, builds to the heart of the story with satisfying momentum, then closes with a real ending that provides a sense of resolution.
- The narrative structure may not be totally chronological, but it fits the narrative mode well. There is a clear, easy-to-follow sequence of events with a definite sense of movement, i.e., something happens.
- All details and events within the story work together to produce a unified, coherent piece of writing. The balance of detail is just right (e.g., not too skimpy--no information overload).
- The story has a controlling idea, central impression, sense of change, or something learned or gained by the writer. There is a reason for the telling.

3 The paper has an identifiable--not particularly strong--storyline. It may read more like a casual recollection of more-or-less related events than a well-crafted story.

- Most of the elements needed to form a complete story are present, but the writer has not yet orchestrated things in a way that creates a stand-alone piece.
- One or more of the following is likely to be true: The writer takes a little long getting in or provides no real lead at all, fails to recognize or accentuate the high point, or provides no real ending to the story.
- The sequence of events may sometimes be interrupted or unclear; it takes some smoothing out or filling in to paraphrase this story.
- The story as a whole may be either encumbered with excess baggage or else a little lean on critical detail.
- Though a story seems buried within the text, it may be hard to infer the significance of the events or the writer's reason for telling the tale.

1 The writer seems detached and willing to settle for what is routine, ordinary or mundane; there is no real mental stretch for writer or reader, no real sense of joy or adventure in the writing.

- The reader is hard-pressed to cite moments that sparkle with originality--moments that belong to this writer alone.
- The writer does not seem captivated by the topic, and/or has not yet thought of a way to enliven or personalize the topic.
- The writer does not put enough of him-or herself in the writing to reveal anything of his/her own perspective or vision of the world.
- As yet the writing lacks the complexity or depth to challenge a reader's thinking or lift the topic out of the realm of the obvious and predictable.

MODE RUBRIC: DESCRIPTIVE

5 The paper creates a strong and vivid image or impression in the reader's mind through numerous, well-chosen details. The writer seems to notice what others might overlook.

- The writing sparkles with specific, elaborate, colorful details. It is easy to picture or feel what the writer is talking about.
- Details are careful, selectively chosen to create a consistent and clear mood, image, or impression, and are so sharp and clear they seem to lock themselves within the reader's memory.
- As appropriate, the writer includes details that appeal to various senses: sight, taste, smell, touch, hearing.

3 The paper includes sufficient descriptive detail to enable the reader to understand the writer's feelings or to picture the object, person or place in a general way. Yet the reader may still have a strong sense that something is missing--that important details have been overlooked. The overall picture or impression is clear only in a broad general sense.

- Some details lack specificity (e.g., "The house was big and nice"), so that the reader has a general, but not vivid, picture of what the writer is talking about.
- Some details seem random, included by chance, rather than selectively chosen to create a particular impression or image. The writer sometimes neglects to weed out what seems trivial and unnecessary or leaves the reader with unanswered questions or conflicting impressions.
- An abundance of modifiers (adjectives everywhere) may sometimes bog the reader down in descriptive overload.
- Opportunities to enrich the description by appealing to several senses may be overlooked.

1 The paper does not include sufficient descriptive detail to enable the reader to get inside the writer's mind or to picture the object, person, or place with any clarity. The overall picture or impression is very sketchy, fuzzy or incomplete.

- Details are overwhelmingly general (e.g., "He was a fun person," "It was neat and stuff"). No clear images or impressions are created.
- Lack of specific detail leaves the reader with numerous unanswered questions; it is very hard to get a mental grip on what the writer is describing.
- The writer does not seem to appeal directly to the reader's senses. Instead, it is left to the reader's imagination (or memory based on a similar experience) to conjure up the details that would flesh out the general impression or picture.

GUIDE TO REVISION--GRADE 8 and 11

Read each sentence. If you think it describes your paper or the way you wrote it, put an **X** in the blank.

IDEAS AND CONTENT

[ ] My paper has a clear purpose or makes a point.
[ ] I choose clear details and examples to help the reader understand my message.
[ ] I stick to the main idea. I leave out details that do not matter.
[ ] I am writing about something I know.

ORGANIZATION

[ ] My introduction would make a reader want to keep reading.
[ ] I tell things in an order that makes sense.
[ ] Details in my paper go together.
[ ] My paper ends in a good spot. It does not stop suddenly or drag on too long.

VOICE

[ ] My writing shows how *I* really think and feel.
[ ] I like what I have written.
[ ] My writing sounds like *me*, and not like someone else.
[ ] I have thought about my reader. I have tried to make my writing clear to the reader.

WORD CHOICE

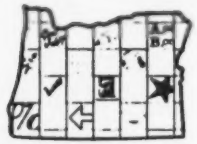
[ ] I choose words that will help make my meaning clear.
[ ] My words paint a picture in the reader's mind.
[ ] I have tried to find *my own* way to say things.
[ ] Sometimes I have tried to say something in a new or different way.

SENTENCE FLUENCY

[ ] My sentences make sense. They are clear.
[ ] Some sentences are longer than others.
[ ] Sentences begin in *different* ways. (They do NOT all begin with the same words.)
[ ] My paper would be easy to read out loud.

CONVENTIONS

[ ] My paragraphs begin in the right spots.
[ ] My punctuation is correct.
[ ] I use capital letters on names of people, places or things.
[ ] I use capital letters to begin sentences.
[ ] My spelling is correct.
[ ] I have proofread my paper.



1991 Oregon Statewide Writing Assessment
Student Writers' Report

NAME :
DISTRICT:
SCHOOL :
TEACHER :

ESSAY ID : 348207
GRADE : 03
TEST DATE: 2/91
PERIOD : 1

Your Scores

	Ideas	Organi-zation	Voice	Word Choice	Sentence Fluency	Conven-tions	Mode	Special Code
READER 1	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	
READER 2	4	4	4	4	4	4	5	

Thank you very much for sharing a sample of your writing with us. Two readers have looked at your writing and their scores are included in this report. Your paper was scored on these seven things:

1. **IDEAS:** How clear, complete and well-developed were your ideas?
2. **ORGANIZATION:** How effective was your introduction? Did you present information in an order that makes sense? Did you end your paper well?
3. **VOICE:** Did you put something of yourself into the paper? Was the writing lively? Did you write what you really thought and felt?
4. **WORD CHOICE:** Did you choose words that helped make your message both interesting and easy to understand?
5. **SENTENCE FLUENCY:** Were sentences smooth and easy to read?
6. **CONVENTIONS:** Did you proofread carefully and correct errors in spelling, punctuation, capitalization and grammar? Did your paragraphs begin at the right spots?
7. **MODE:** Did your writing match the purpose suggested by your writing topic? For instance, did you write a story if you were asked to do that? Did you write a clear, thorough explanation if you were asked to do that?

HERE IS WHAT THE SPECIAL CODES MEAN:

Special codes appear in the last column of scores only if they apply to your paper.

TS: Too Short - Your paper was blank or too short for the readers to score.

OTS: Off Topic Scorable - Your paper was scored, but it was not on the topic that you were given.

OTN: Off Topic Nonscorable - Your paper was not on the topic you were given, and the readers could not score it.

MS: Miscellaneous - Your paper was not scored for a reason other than those listed above. For example, you wrote a poem, you didn't write in English, or your paper was illegible.

If the two scores in any trait differ, that means the two readers did not totally agree on their judgment of your performance on that trait. In this case, your score is a combination of the two readers' scores. For example, a 3/4 shows that your score is somewhere between 3 and 4.

HERE IS WHAT THE SCORES MEAN. If you received a

Score of 1: The reader felt your writing was still in a "searching" stage where you were still looking for a topic or way to handle this trait.

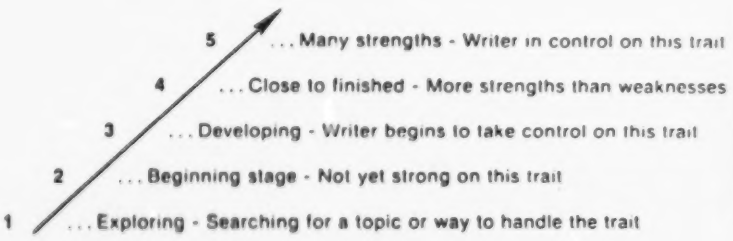
Score of 2: The reader felt your writing was in a "beginning" stage but did not yet show real strengths on this trait.

Score of 3: The reader felt your writing showed a balance of strengths and weaknesses and that, as a writer, you were beginning to take control of your writing on this trait.

Score of 4: The reader felt your writing showed more real strengths than weaknesses on this trait and needed only a bit more work.

Score of 5: The reader felt your writing showed many strengths on this trait and that, as a writer, you were in control of your writing.

"X" in Mode: You did not write in the mode intended by the prompt you received. For example, you were supposed to write persuasively, but the readers judged your real intention was something else, say personal narrative. Your paper was, however, scored in the other traits.


5 ... Many strengths - Writer in control on this trait
4 ... Close to finished - More strengths than weaknesses
3 ... Developing - Writer begins to take control on this trait
2 ... Beginning stage - Not yet strong on this trait
1 ... Exploring - Searching for a topic or way to handle the trait

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BIBLIOGRAPHY: TEACHING WRITING

Atwell, Nancie. *In The Middle*. Portsmouth, New Hampshire: Heinemann, 1987.

My personal favorite. Nancie writes with soul and teaches with gusto, courage and wit. Despite all this, she's still humble and highly introspective. When you read the book, you'll wish she'd been one of your teachers. Mostly written for the middle school/junior high teachers, but don't miss it, even if that's not your level. There's inspiration enough here for all.

Calkins, Lucy McCormick. *The Art of Teaching Writing*. Portsmouth, New Hampshire: Heinemann. 1986.

If you get just one new reference book this year, you might want to make it this one. It's full of practical, down-to-earth advice well-grounded in this excellent teacher's personal experience. Primarily aimed at elementary teachers, but with a nod to middle school, and much wisdom applicable at all levels, right through adult. A book to cherish.

Calkins, Lucy McCormick and Shelley Harwayne. *The Writing Workshop: A World of Difference*. Portsmouth, New Hampshire: Heinemann. 1987.

Another gem, and it comes with a video.

Elbow, Peter. *Embracing Contraries*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1986.

A collection of 12 essays that show how to mix rigor with natural inspiration. Elbow challenges the standard practice of single-person evaluation of writing, citing the value and larger truth in multiple responses. Read this book to find out how the functions of generative writer and controlling editor can truly harmonize. Elbow writes with style and grace. You won't be bored.

Elbow, Peter. *Writing with Power*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1981.

Elbow is particularly eloquent in this book on the subject of voice; the book is worth the purchase price for that section alone. He also offers fine tips on improving your writing and that of your students.

Emblen, D. L. and Arnold Solkov. *Before and After: The Shape and Shaping of Prose*. New York: Random House, 1986.

Have you ever wondered what the speeches of Franklin Delano Roosevelt or Martin Luther King might have looked like as they were being written? Find out. Trace the development of writings by Stephen Crane, Donald Hall, E. B. White, and others. This is a book of writing in the making that shows revision for what it is: the dynamics of an active mind at work.

Frank, Marjorie. *If You're Gonna Teach Kids How to Write, You've Gotta Have This Book*. Nashville, Tennessee: Incentive Publications, 1979.

Incredible numbers of practical ideas for everyday activities and assignments. Good tips on helping beginning writers revise and gain confidence.

Graves, Donald H. *Writing: Teachers and Children At Work.* Portsmouth, New Hampshire: Heinemann, 1983.

The title tells it all. Graves takes us right into the classroom to witness the victories and struggles of teachers and children up close. A master teacher with an easy-on-the-ear style, Graves helps us make the connection between theory and practical experience, as only he can. One of the best.

Hillocks, George, Jr. *Research on Written Composition: New Directions For Teaching.* Urbana, Illinois: ERIC Clearinghouse on Reading and Communication Skills.

You've heard that the study of grammar is ineffective in improving writing skills and that worksheets take up time that could be better spent. Is it true? Here's the book that will tell you. If you're looking for a light, breezy style, this isn't the book for you. It's often dry, weighted down with details and data. But it's thorough, professional and unambiguous.

Mohr, Marian. *Revision: They Rhythm of Meaning.* Upper Mont Clair, New Jersey: Boynton/Cook Publishers, Inc.

Revision isn't for people who didn't get it right. It's for everybody--including the authors of the Declaration of Independence. Learn why, and take an inside look at the revision process through this thoughtful book.

Murray, Donald M. *A Writer Teaches Writing.* (Second edition: A complete revision.) Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1985.

Can a reference book on writing read like a novel? If it's written by Donald M. Murray, it can come close. For learning what the writing process is all about, this book is tough to beat. Murray discusses his own writing with a graceful humor and appealing insight. This is a remarkably instructive book so entertaining you can take it along on vacation.

Perl, Sondra and Nancy Wilson. *Through Teachers' Eyes: Portraits of Writing Teachers At Work.* Portsmouth, New Hampshire: Heinemann, 1986.

Fascinating. You'll see yourself again and again in the successes and failures of real flesh and blood teachers in the classroom, who are trying to learn right along with their students. Excellent examples of students' writing at grades 1, 4, 8, and 11. Don't miss this book.

Spandel, Vicki and Richard Stiggins. *Creating Writers: Linking Assessment and Writing Instruction.* New York: Addison Wesley/Longman, 1990.

You can learn to assess writing analytically--then teach the process to your students. Students, grade 4 on up, who learn assessment skills, learn new ways of thinking about writing, and build skills not only in revising, but in writing first drafts. This book will show you how to integrate writing instruction and writing assessment in useful ways, and empower students as evaluators of their own work.

Stock, Gregory. *The Kids' Book of Questions.* New York: Workman Publishing, 1988.

This intriguing little book is questions, questions, and more questions--that's it. These questions do not have right or wrong answers; they're intended to make kids think and to speak or write at some length--no easy yes or no answers. Some questions are personal, and you may feel they go too far, but you can pick and choose--or modify. You'll get lots of ideas for writing and discussion from this handy resource.

Ziegler, Alan. *The Writing Workshop*. New York: Teachers of Writing Collaborative, 1981.

An excellent resource on the workshop approach to writing instruction.

Zinsser, William. *On Writing Well*. (Third edition.) New York: Harper and Row, 1985.

Zinsser practices what he preaches; he writes well. If I were going to write the great American novel, I'd want Zinsser to be my editor. He knows what he's talking about--and he knows how to put things so that you understand and remember. He's bright, witty, knowledgeable--and he breaks through to the heart of what good writing is about. Read bits and pieces of this book aloud to students; you'll entertain and enlighten everyone at the same time. A fine, fine book.

1991 Writing Content Panel

Linda Beith	David Douglas School District, Portland
Brian Borton	Astoria Elementary School, Astoria
Mike Boyle	Lincoln Junior High, Burns
Darlene Clarridge	Multnomah Education Service District, Portland
Marge Frank	Pinehurst Elementary School, Ashland
Chris Glide	Condon High School, Condon
Linda Harris	Woodlawn Elementary School, Portland
Bonnie Hill	Alsea High School, Alsea
Wally Hyde	Pistol River Elementary School, Pistol River
Gay Masters	Salem-Keizer School District, Salem
Angela Meabe	Waluga Junior High, Lake Oswego
Karen Piepmeier	Linfield College, McMinnville
Richard Sheldahl	Myrtle Point School District, Myrtle Point
Lana Stanley	Hermiston High School, Hermiston
Don Weiss	Western Oregon State College, Monmouth
Nancy Withycombe	Tum-A-Lum Elementary School, Milton-Freewater

1992 Writing Content Panel

Linda Beith	David Douglas School District, Portland
Patty Beauchanp	Jefferson Elementary, Corvallis
Don Blanchard	Sunset High School, Beaverto
Brian Borton	Astoria Elementary School, Astoria
Mike Boyles	Lincoln Junior High, Burns
Darlene Clarridge	Multnomah Education Service District, Portland
Judy Drais	Talent Junior High, Talent
Chris Glide	Seaside High School, Seaside
Linda Harris	Woodlawn Elementary School, Portland
Bonnie Hill	Alsea High School, Alsea
Gay Masters	Salem-Keizer School District, Salem
Angela Meabe	Waluga Junior High, Lake Oswego
Nick Miller	Cedaroak Park Elementary, West Linn
Richard Sheldahl	Myrtle Point School District, Myrtle Point
Lana Stanley	Hermiston High School, Hermiston
Don Weiss	Western Oregon State College, Monmouth
Patty Wixon	Walker Elementary, Ashland

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